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THE
THEOLOGICAL,
PHILOSOPHICAL AND MISCELLANEOUS
WORKS

OF THE
REV. WILLIAM JONES, M.A. F.R.S.

IN TWELVE VOLUMES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,
A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF HIS
LIFE AND WRITINGS.

VOL. II.



LONDON:

PRINTED FOR F. AND C. RIVINGTON, NO. 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD;
J. ROBSON, NEW BOND STREET; AND
J. MATCHARD, PICCADILLY.

1801.

NOV 25 1884

PRINTED BY EYE AND LAW,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE, CLERKENWELL.

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A
FULL ANSWER

TO AN
ESSAY ON SPIRIT.

WHEREIN

All the Author's Objections, both *Scriptural* and
Philosophical, to the Doctrine of the TRINITY;
his Opinions relating to the *Uniformity* of the
Church; his Criticisms upon the Athanasian and
Nicene CREEDS, &c. are examined and confuted.

WITH

A Particular EXPLANATION of the *Hermetic*, *Pytha-
gorean*, and *Platonic* TRINITIES.

AND

A PREFACE, giving some Account of an Author
who published in *Defence* of the ESSAY.



PREFACE.



IT was not my intention to trouble or detain the Reader with a Preface; but some time after the following sheets were ready for the press, a pamphlet came forth with this title—*A Defence of the Essay on Spirit; with Remarks on the several pretended Answers; and which may serve as an antidote against all that shall ever appear against it.*—If the book itself should really be able to support such a Title-page, and be found answerable to the latter part of it, my labour can avail but little. I think, however, that I may be pretty secure of its making any impression to my disadvantage, as the author of it, in the first place, does not seem rightly to understand the very scope and design of the piece he has undertaken to *defend*.

He tells us, that the author of the *Essay's* “*whole*” book seems *only* intended, not to enforce any explanations of his own, but to shew how ineffectual “all attempts to explain this mystery (the doctrine

" of the Trinity) have been hitherto *." Now, if he has enforced *no* explanations of his own, then it would be impossible for me to extract and produce them : but the substance of them, in short, is as follows ;—The person of the *Father*, only, is the *one supreme intelligent Agent* : the *Son*, and *Holy Spirit*, are not really God, but *called so*, because by an authority communicated to them from the Supreme, they are commissioned to ACT AS GODS, with regard to those inferior beings committed to their charge†.—And so far is the *Essay* writer from endeavouring to exclude *every* explanation, that his whole book is principally calculated for the support of *this*.

Let it also be considered, that in the *dedication* prefixed to his *Essay*, he hopes that " his sentiments " will by gentle degrees come, by the blessing of " God, to be made a part of the established religion " of the country ". If, therefore, as it is asserted in the *Defence*, he has enforced *no* explanation of the Trinity ; and it is nevertheless hoped in the *Essay*, that *his sentiments* will be made a part of the established religion ; this is in effect to hope, that *Nothing* (by the blessing of God) will be established as a fundamental of the christian faith. So that this Gentle-

* Defence, p. 5.

† See chap. V. of the following *Answer*.

‡ P. 51.

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man, instead of *defending* the *Essay*, seems to have defeated its principal intention, misrepresented its author, and reduced his whole book to an absurdity.

Another method of this writer, almost as hurtful to the cause he has undertaken as the former, is to assert what he cannot possibly know to be true, even supposing it were so, and what the world must know to be false. Upon the publication of the *Essay*, and to prevent in some measure (as the *Editor* expresses himself) the evil effects of that treatise, a justly celebrated discourse on the Trinity, by the late Dean *Swift*, was reprinted in *Ireland*. This discourse, the author now before us has assaulted with a great degree of prejudice and animosity; and after he has sifted some absurd and contradictory senses out of its expressions, and treated his lordship of *Orrery*, and other *able* and *learned* gentlemen, with great contempt for not having *skill enough* to make the same discovery, confidently affirms, that he has “shewn the *Dean* to “have been *an Arian* in his heart^d.” Now, if the *Dean* has been so unhappy in his expressions, as to subscribe himself *an Arian*, while he meant to declare himself *a Catholic*, he must surely have wanted common sense, a defect, which (in his day) he was farther from than most men living: if in his expressions

^d Page 34.



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nation, that he hateth ; for the adoration of the *creature*, to redound to the glory of the *Creator* ; and for the worship of an idol, the stump of a tree, to *terminate in the one only and true God*.

I will in this place take the liberty of propounding the following short remark : that as it appears from the text of St. *Paul* above-cited, we are to worship those only who are (*φύσει Θεοί*) *Gods by nature* ; and as all the primitive ecclesiastical writers, in their application of the term *ουσία*, *essence*, make it synonymous with *φύσις*, *nature* ^b, it may, I humbly conceive, be inferred from hence, that the *Homoeousian* doctrine, for the sake of which the *Arians* would reject both the *Athanasian* and *Nicene* creeds, is scriptural in its *term*, as well as in its *sense*. For, if we are to worship the *Son* and *Holy Spirit*, as the *Arians* themselves are forced to confess, they must be *God by NATURE*, *ομοουσιον*, *of the same essence or nature* with God the Father * ; if not, the adoration we pay to them must include us in that sentence of condemnation passed upon the idolatrous Gentiles. But to re-

^a Deut. xii. 31. See chap. xxviii. 14, &c.

^b Ιερον, οτι οὐσία καὶ φύσις ταυτοὶ εἰσι παρὰ τοῖς πατέσιν. Notandum est, essentiam & naturam idem esse apud Patres. Leonti. de Sect. p. 308.

* See the argument from the word *φύσις* farther insisted upon in the *Cath. Doctr.* p. 47. Edit. 3. 8vo.

turn to the author whose manner of reasoning I shall, in the next place, take some notice of.

Dean *Swift* tells us in his Sermon, that “about
“ three hundred years after Christ, there sprang up:
“ an heresy of people called *Arians*, from one *Arius*,
“ the leader of them: these (says he) denied our
“ Saviour to be God;” where the author immediately
replies—“ than which nothing can be more false; for
“ they did acknowledge him to be Godⁱ.”

Here the reader should be informed, that this writer has two definitions of a God: by the first, there is a *supreme* and *true* God; by the second, a subordinate and nominal God, who only *acts as* such, of which sort he says there may be *three hundred*^k. Now if it be said, that the *Arians* denied our Saviour to be *God*, he exclaims against the charge, as if it were false, when in reality nothing ever was more true. For Dr. *Swift* meant, and this author knew it very well, that the *Arians* denied *Christ* to be the *true* God; whereas he himself only means, that they did not deny him to be one of the *three hundred* above-mentioned.

Where he cannot disprove any thing, he puzzles and perplexes the whole cause, and by interweaving a proportionable quantity of falshood, renders a ques-

ⁱ Page 22.

^k Page 44.

tion, in every view of it, unintelligible; and so far he is certainly in the right; for error is not to be advanced either by truth, or perspicuity. In pursuance of this plan, he confounds the *Consubstantialists* (that is, the *catholic christians*) with the *Sabellians*, and the *Sabellians* with the *Consubstantialists*, in the following manner—"The *Consubstantialists* and the "*Sabellians* (says he) agree *exactly* in their opinion " of the indivisible unity of the substance of God between the *three Persons* of the Trinity¹." Which is impossible to be true: for if the *Sabellians* agreed so *exactly* in this matter with the *Catholics*, they must then have maintained that there *were* three Persons in the Trinity, between whom this indivisible union might subsist; but on the contrary, they affirmed the whole Godhead to be *μία υπόστασις, ἢ μονοῦ προσώπου*^m, *only ONE hypostasis or Person*.

Again: "When the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit," says he, "are declared by the *Athanasians* to be the " same one undivided Person in reality; I own I do " not see any difference between that and the doctrine " of *Sabellius*."ⁿ First, he makes the *Sabellians* assert *three* Persons in the Godhead, who never allowed *more than one*; then, makes the *Athanasians* allow

¹ Page 27, 28.

^m See *Epiph. v. 2. p. 513.*

ⁿ Page 42, 43.

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But *one* Person, who always asserted *three* ; and then solemnly declares—that he sees no difference between their doctrines ! This very precipitate gentleman ought to have reflected seriously on the notorious falsities advanced in his book, of which I could produce *many* more instances. If he should condescend to do this, at my earnest request, I would then recommend to him a comparison between *Rev.* ii. 2. and xxi. 8. Being willing to hope, that those texts, when laid together and considered, may have such an influence upon his heart, as to induce him to alter his style, and favour us with a piece rather more chastised and correct, if ever he should appear again in the capacity of an author.

I cannot observe in a more proper place, that he threatens the world with a treatise, whence it will “ appear, that that part of our Ecclesiastical History, “ which relates to the dispute between the *Arians* “ and *Athasians*, is little better than an heap of “ falsities and forgeries.” For I apprehend, that the forgeries above-mentioned will enable any reader to conceive a proper idea of an *Arian* turned *Historian*. If these are not sufficient, let him attentively peruse the author’s whole book ; and if that will not do, let me beseech him to consider that account the

most excellent and learned bishop *Bull* has given of *Christoph. Sandius's Nucleus Historiæ Ecclesiasticæ — copiosissimâ fabularum & contradictionum accessione locupletatus.**—and I am persuaded he will then be upon his guard against every historical tract which comes from *that* quarter.

I shall now remark (and in truth I am almost tired of remarking) his rashness in censuring what, it is plain, he has not properly considered. The celebrated and learned Dr. *Stebbing*, in a quotation this author has made from him, says, “How three, as distinct in
“point of agency, as *Peter, James, and John,*
“should by one common principle of existence, be
“one eternal God; this exceeds the measure of our
“finite understandings to comprehend: yet it is not
“therefore a contradiction; yet it is not therefore
“incredible.” Which observation, though common, is yet very pious, well expressed, and worthy of a Christian Divine. But, says our author, “If the
“Doctor had but inserted any one noun-substantive
“after the adjective *three*, which he, as all the *Ath-*
“*nasians* carefully do, has *disingenuously* omitted,
“and without which the whole sentence is *nonsense* *,”

* Def. Fid. Nic. Proem. § 6. See also Pages 69, 121, 229, & alibi sparsim.—The *Irenicum Irenicorum* is another history of the same complexion with *Sandius*.

* He elsewhere says of this expression that it is—nonsense artfully cloathing itself, that it may look something like sense.

“ he could not have avoided seeing the contradiction, “ as well as pointing it out to others “ .” The noun-substantive inserted by the church upon this occasion, is the word *Persons* : and the most free and dispassionate enquirer can perceive no contradiction in saying, that the blessed Trinity are three *Persons*, and one *God* ; three and one, in *different respects* ; three, in respect of their *personality*, and one in respect of their *divine nature* ; or, as Dr. Stebbing has worded it, their *common principle of existence*. To say, either that they are three Persons and one Person, or, three Gods and one God, would be to suppose them three and one, in one and the same respect, and would indeed amount to a contradiction in terms ; which is the very thing this author has made of it : “ for (adds he) “ every one, who is not *out of his senses*, must “ see, that affirming *three eternal Gods* to be one “ *eternal God*, is a contradiction “ .” Very true : and I hope no man that is *in his senses*, when writing upon such a subject as this, would dare to *make* a contradiction where he did not *find* one. But I must press this point a little farther : for it is observable, that the very same omission of the noun-substantive, and where the very same sense is expressed too,

¶ P. 34. 35.

¶ *Ibid.*

occurs more than once in the *inspired writings*, *πνεῦμα καὶ ψαλμὸς* EN ΕΣΜΕΝ; and again, *Οὐλοὶ οὐ ΤΡΕΙΣ*, EN ΕΣΤΙ, *These THREE are ONE*—so that this bold accusation of *disingenuity, nonsense*, and something worse, alledged at first against Dr. *Stebbing*, will, when carried forwards, be at last fixed upon Him—whose name I dare not mention upon such an occasion.

In order to give a proper account of the *antidote*, and enable the reader, as well as I can, to comprehend the force and propriety of it, it will be requisite to premise a few of the author's principles, as they are to be collected from that part of his book, which precedes what is called in the Title-page—*An antidote against all that shall ever appear against the Essay on Spirit*.

The author of the *Defence* then, declares against all the *decrees of councils* and *doctrines of men*^a; advises *metaphysical divines* to *forbear their own comments*^b; and will suffer nothing but *clear and express revelation*^c to determine him with regard to any article of moment. And yet, in express contradiction to all this, the ingredients of his *antidote*, which is to preclude all future controversies, to deter-

^a P. 3.^b *Ibid.*^c P. 4, 50, 79.

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mine the question for ever on the *Arian* side, and (as its very name implies) to *expel* the poison of orthodoxy, are nothing more than a quotation from *Justin Martyr* ^v, and another from the *Gentleman's Religion* ^x; the former a very obscure *metaphysical comment*, the latter a groundless and unsupported assertion. If we had not ocular demonstration for this, it would seem altogether incredible, that the same author who has rejected all *human comments*, and set at nought *all the councils in Christendom* ^z, should think himself secure under the shelter of that very authority, nay, under a small and insignificant portion of it, the whole of which he has made it his business to vilify and condemn. Had he been more consistent with himself, and proposed his quotation from *Justin Martyr* with the sobriety that might have been expected, I should then have attempted to shew, that it contains *the indivisible union of the Son with the substance of the Father*; though blended, as I freely confess, with some perplexed and metaphysical reasonings, more reconcileable to the principles of *Plato*, than to those of the *Holy Scripture*. However, as he has introduced it in such a manner as to render it repugnant to his own principles, and therefore incapable of doing *his* cause the least service (be the doctrine of

^v P. 54 to 78.

^x P. 79 to 82.

^z P. 29.

it

(if this or that) I shall not try to give the reader any edification or amusement by a critical discussion of a very long passage, unlikely to afford either.

But I must not throw his book aside, without giving some short account of his language; I mean, of his candour, humility, and charity; which virtues are as much disregarded in the *Defence*, (if that be possible) as they are recommended in the *Essay*.

The gentlemen who have advised the Reverend author of the *Essay* to resign his preferment; that is, in effect, to appease his conscience, retract his subscription, and cease to disturb the peace of the church with his own private scruples; he upbraids with a *spirit of persecution and ignorance*²: which is not more unkind than it is untrue and injudicious. For, on the contrary, those restless and discontented men, who have railed against the doctrines and authority of the church as an intolerable burden, and have undertaken to supplant its truth by a surreptitious introduction of their own errors, (whatever specious appearances of candour and moderation they might at first assume in *proposing* them) have in fact, when affairs have taken an unhappy turn, themselves proved the most lawless persecutors and merciless oppressors of all *civil and religious* liberty: and I leave it to be

² P. 52.

considered, whether the spirit which has discovered itself in this *Defence*, were it permitted to have its full play, would not treat all its opponents with as little mercy as they did. Besides, how inconsistent is it, first to tell us that our doctrines and subscriptions are such as must *drive all men of sense and honesty* (such as the author is) *out of the church*^b; and then, when we ground a slight admonition upon his own principle, to turn short upon us with the stale pretences of *popery ! persecution ! St. Dominic ! Bishop Bonner ! fire ! faggot, &c.*^c !

Dean *Swift* he calls a *Goliath of Gath*, sent out (by the republication of his sermon in *Ireland*) to *defy the armies of the living God*; and thinks he has *slung a few round pebbles of arguments so directly in his face, as to make him lie prostrate upon the ground*^d. Which unnatural application of the Scripture-history gives us a taste of his vanity; and shews, that in his opinion the *Arians* are the elect people of God, the *true Israelites*, whilst all the opposers of their doctrine (which I hope includes every good christian in the nation) are uncircumcised *Philistines*, infidels, idolaters, and in professed rebellion against *the living God*.

^b P. 52.^c *Ibid.*^d P. 21. and 53.

The orthodox Clergy in general, he reviles as a set of cloudy, bigotted, indolent men, who, *if they can but preserve their subscriptions and good livings, care not what becomes of Christianity*^e; because they have not wrote an answer (or had not at least when his book was published) to the late Lord *Bolingbroke's* objections; and unless he *has written one himself*, it is unfair to make this a pretence for insulting *them*.

The learned gentlemen that have appeared in print against the *Essay*, he calls, *collectors of cavils*^f, *orthodox gentry*^g, men that *neither understand the dispute, nor any thing else*^h, *their own trumpeters*ⁱ, *minor scribblers*^k, *animals*^l, *buzzing insects*^m, *hard heads*ⁿ, &c. &c. charges the grave and learned Dr. *Stebbing* with wilful *nonsense*, the whole church with *blasphemy*^o: then wipes his mouth, and humbly desires that if any body should undertake to *answer the Essay on Spirit*, they will do it with—*Christian candour and moderation*^p!

From this view of things, we cannot but conceive a proper opinion both of the talents and the *spirit* of this author; whom, in truth, it has given me much

^e P. 52, 53.^f P. 2.^{g,h} P. 19. and 53.^h P. 15.ⁱ P. 17.^k P. 51.^l P. 52.^m P. 51.ⁿ P. 52.^o P. 10, 44.^p P. 52.

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less pleasure to expose, than concern that there was occasion for it. And now, if this *Defence* was written by the *author of the Essay*, what an amazing change of character is here! In the *Essay* it is—*Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto*¹.—*That principle which directs us to use all men well, can never vindicate us in using any man ill*².—And again—*were it not that experience convinces us of the matter of fact, it would be HARD TO BELIEVE that men's passions could carry them to that degree of animosity against each other, on account of opinions* BARELY SPECULATIVE (such as the *Catholic doctrine of the Trinity* is supposed to be, and upon which the dispute has turned in *this Defence*) *which we find practised in all countries, and almost in all ages*³. There the ruling principle is an universal love and affection, making charitable allowances for every sect of men in the world; extending even to *Hereticks, Infidels, Jews, and Mahometans*; and lavishly dispensing, as from the papal chair, its indulgences to every error under heaven. But *here* (in the *Defence*) a very different passion is predominant; so far from making allowances in favour of error, that it cannot bear even the least degree of opposition from the sincere advocates of the *truth*;

¹ Ded. p. 35.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.* p. 33.

but vents itself in wilful forgeries, contempt, calumny, and all the overflowings of an enraged malevolence. The *Essay* and the *Defence* of it being generally allowed to have come from the same hand, the indecent heat and obloquy of this latter piece will oblige us to understand all the *candid expressions* in the former work as things uttered under a mask, and against the course of nature. Where the mind is misled, the spirit is very apt to be embittered: and *true charity* is the fruit only of *true religion*. Whence it comes to pass, that if gentleness and moderation are affected by the disturbers of our peace to serve a turn, they are pretty sure to appear in their proper character as soon as they are *contradicted*. When the wolf assumes the person of the sheep, the likeness is found only in the *skin*; the voice, and the teeth, and the claws, are just as different as they were before; and if the animal is suspected, and forced upon a scuffle in his own defence, the cloathing is of no farther service.

However this may be, it plainly appears, that the favourers of *Arianism* are not always candid and charitable: therefore I must beg leave to observe, that if any learned gentleman, who is of their opinion, should think so inconsiderable a writer as I am worth his notice, and fairly propose his objections to any

part

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part of the following work with sense and argument, I shall be ready, with God's leave, to give him satisfaction to the best of my abilities, and with seriousness and moderation. But if any writer should unfortunately fix upon the same plan with the author of this *Defence*, and persuade himself that he can invalidate my arguments by setting me down for an *animal*, a *buzzing insect*, or an *hard head*, I can easily forgive him, but must be excused from making any reply.

When the first edition of this answer was published, it was heavily threatened, and I was assured that some sufficient hand would undertake to write against it; but nothing appeared, except some flourishes of the Bear-garden in a *Monthly Review*, the production of a set of writers, with whose principles, designs, and calumnies, the public is now so well acquainted, that they will never think the worse of any *Christian*, because he is reviled and outraged in their publications.

If some may have been prevented either from reading or approving this work, or any other I have published, by the illiberal railings of *Reviews* and *News Papers*, the time may come when they will be undeceived: and if not, I have met with so much friendship and favour from men of genius, men of the best

learning, and highest station, that I am already more than recompensed for all the detractions of infidelity, envy, ignorance, or uncharitableness.

The *Defence* of the *Essay on Spirit*, of which I have now been giving an account, is so empty of wit and argument, and withal so domineering in its manner and expression, that the reader may perhaps be discouraged from going through the following sheets, and think it scarcely worth his while to see the book itself confuted. Therefore I beg leave to assure him, that many articles of great importance are brought into consideration, to which I endeavoured to do as much justice as I was able; and there is among the rest a subject of great curiosity, the *Trinity of the Heathens*, which I have here opened as to its meaning, and illustrated it from prophane authors in a manner not to be met with in any other publication that I know of,

This answer was written at a time when I could not possibly have gone through it, under the disadvantage of my situation upon a country curacy, unless I had been favoured with the use of a well furnished library, belonging to my principal, Sir *John Dolben*, to whom the first edition was dedicated; a gentleman, whose memory I shall always regard with honour and gratitude, for the benevolence of his nature, his
learning,

learning, and accomplishments, and above the rest, his piety and charity: all of which were once so well known, and are now so well remembered, that it is not necessary for me to enlarge upon them in this place.

When a man ventures to become an author early in life, it is very possible that his zeal, on some occasions, should be greater than his experience; and this consideration will, I hope, be of some weight with those who are friends to the church, and are more than pretenders to learning, not to be extreme in remarking the imperfections of the following treatise; some of which this latter impression has given me an opportunity of removing.

As to those readers, who are content to ground their belief (if I may call it such) on the infallibility of a *Clarke*, a *Sykes*, or an *Hoadley*, &c. I shall be disappointed if I expect that they will either make any candid allowances for me, or venture to give me any of their arguments; and so I leave them to proceed as they have hitherto done: not without beseeching God that he would open their eyes, and bring them back to the ways of truth, righteousness, and peace, for his glory, and the saving of their own souls.

PLUCKLEY,
March 7, 1769.



AN
ANSWER
TO AN
ESSAY ON SPIRIT.

THE author of this *Essay* addresses his *dedication* to the Lord-primate of *Ireland*, and sets out with telling his Grace, that “ as a clergyman, he was obliged to sub-
“ scribe the articles of our religion, and give
“ his assent to all things contained in the
“ *Book of Common Prayer* ; but since that
“ time, having *thought*, as well as *read*, he
“ finds that he does not now agree *exactly*
“ in sentiment either with his *former opi-*
“ *nions*, or with those persons who drew up
“ the articles of our religion, or with the
“ compilers of our Liturgy, and in particular
“ with

“ with the *Athanasian* Creed ; and therefore
 “ he has laboured under some difficulties
 “ how to direct himself in these circum-
 “ stances.”

In all this the author gives notice to the primate, (and had his name been prefixed to the work, the notice had been very fair and honest) that he is at length become heterodox in his opinions. This he imputes to his *thinking* as well as reading. I am sorry to observe, that this change in his character is the reverse of what happened in *St. Paul* ; who began first with *thinking*, and proceeded thence to *believing*. *I verily thought with myself* (saith he) *that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Acts xxvi. 9.* And though he appears to have been naturally a man of a tender and humane disposition, his mistaken way of *thinking* had so ill an influence upon his conduct, that he *beat in every Synagogue them that believed. Ibid. xxii. 19.* But when it pleased God to open his eyes, he was transformed from a *thinker* into a *believer* ; and consequently, from a *persecutor* into a *sufferer* ; boasting of it as his privilege, that it was given to him *not only to believe* on the name of Christ, but also *to suffer for his sake.*

sake. The author will provoke us to consider this difference between *thinking* and *believing* in a more particular manner in the following pages.

As to the *difficulty* he complains of under his present circumstances, I apprehend it is no very difficult matter to direct himself, properly on such an occasion; because nothing hinders him from resigning his preferments, if he objects to the conditions upon which they are held. He confesses, that he now differs in opinion from himself; from the persons who drew up our articles in conformity to the word of God; from those who in this age are subscribers to the faith; in short, he confesses that the whole established church is against him. Now he cannot surely be so unmerciful to our consciences, as to expect that we shall disregard all these authorities; go contrary to the sense of the church in all ages; and calmly give up our faith and doctrine, in compliance with the opinion of one single person, who, not many years ago, was of a different opinion; and is perhaps but lately come to his present opinion: which is to suppose, that the truth of Christianity depends upon opinion; and that its very leading article, the doctrine of the Trinity, may

may be this or that, just as a wavering mind happens to *think*.

That vein of scepticism in which this author hath indulged himself, inclines him to *apprehend any attempt towards avoiding diversity of opinions, not only to be an useless, but also an impracticable scheme*. In the title prefixed to the Articles of the Church of England, the *avoiding diversity of opinion* appears to be only one half of the design with which they were drawn up; or rather, it is in fact the same thing with *the establishing of consent touching true religion*. If *true religion* then is of any importance to the world, the attempt to bring men to a *consent* about it is laudable, pious, and necessary. But if it matters not whether men embrace truth, or falshood, whether they have the faith of Protestants, the superstition of Papists, or the heresy of *Arius*, *Socinus*, or the Alcoran; then the attempt to reconcile them to one and the same rule of faith is, as this writer calls it, an *useless scheme*. If it should also be found *impracticable*, St. Paul hath published an injunction which is very absurd, because no man can be bound to perform what is impossible. *I beseech you brethren, by the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that*
ye

ye all speak the same thing, *and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment* ^b. Such was the advice of this inspired Apostle to the church of Corinth: But the author of an *Essay on Spirit*, having *thought as well as read*, hath discovered that all attempts of this sort are *not only useless, but also impracticable*.

He is fond of this discovery, and expresses a doubt *whether any two thinking men are agreed exactly in their opinions*. If by *thinking men* he means learned christians, who have studied the Bible and primitive antiquity with a proper regard to both, I am very sure he is mistaken; for two such men, if shut up in separate cells, as they report of the seventy Greek interpreters, would as surely agree in *sense* as they would differ in *expression*, if required to deliver their opinion concerning any fundamental doctrine of christianity. By *thinking men*, therefore, I suppose him to mean *deistical philosophers*, who think *at random*, or, as they call it, *freely*. If an assembly of these were to be questioned concerning their own inventions, there would

^b 1 Cor. i. 10.

probably

probably be as many opinions as men, and all without foundation.

Thus much for the disagreements of *thinking men*; from whom the *author* makes a transition to what he calls, the *unthinking*, and observes, that *whatever country you go into, let the religion be what it will, the unthinking part are always the reputed orthodox*^c. A truly christian account of the holy catholic church ! which, it seems, is composed of nothing but men who *think* without *agreeing*; and men who *agree* without *thinking*. I would ask this gentleman, from whom the *unthinking herd*^d of this nation derive the faith now established in our creeds and articles ? for if they did not also derive it from *another* unthinking-herd, their orthodoxy will reflect no disgrace upon the religion of *their country*. But they derive it, through the ministration of the Apostles and their successors, from *Christ* ; therefore the *herd*, whether thinking or unthinking, can as *orthodox*, be charged with nothing, but what, if carried far enough backwards, will equally hold good against *Christ* and his apostles.

^c P. 7.

^d Ibid.

However

However we may boldly challenge him to *prove* the *orthodox* an *unthinking herd*; because the men, who are the formal professors of orthodoxy, are those who solemnly subscribe their unfeigned assent to the orthodox faith, I mean, the clergy of the nation; who, from the discipline they undergo before they are called upon to give this proof of their orthodoxy, are supposed, at least, to be men of some discernment in matters of christian doctrine and human literature. These then are the *unthinking herd*, thus reflected upon, of whom he charitably concludes, that if they submit to the Creeds, they do it without thought; for to think, in his sense, is to contradict the church. But neither will the subject bear to be inverted; for it is not altogether so clear, that ignorance will preserve an appearance of orthodoxy among the vulgar; rather the contrary. For most of those sectaries which have rejected orthodoxy, and look upon the glad and humble professors of it, as *Milton* represents the *Devil* to have looked upon *Gabriel**, have generally sprung

* Proud *limitary* cherub! Par. Lost, B. iv. 969. Had *Satan* been speaking to one of the orthodox, instead of *limitary*, he would have said, I suppose—*pacing in the tram-*
mels of the Church. See *Middleton's Free Enquiry.*

from

from the root of ignorance; which, when nourished by a proper degree of pride, is always productive of error.

The *Quakers*, for example, arose from the ever memorable *George Fox*, a mean and ignorant mechanic, who could hardly spell his own name; yet, with bloody invectives against *Baal's priests*, execrable hirelings, devil-driven *Judases*, with which, and many more such soft appellations, he honoured all the true ministers of Christ, was enabled to draw away the *unlearned and unstable* into the very sink of error and delusion. Now, if to *think*, be to substitute heterodoxy, and a lying spirit, in the place of sound faith, and the spirit of truth, *George Fox* and his adherents ought to sit very high in the synagogue of *thinkers*; and if the author should still profess to *think*, in this sense, it may not be an unprofitable mortification to him, to see how much nearer the *thinking herd* approach to brutality, than those whom he is pleased to sneer for slavishly embracing the *creed of their fathers*.

He allows, indeed, that an *uniformity of profession may be both practicable and useful; and that it seems in some degree necessary—*
for

for the good of society^f. In this, if I am not so unhappy as to misunderstand him, he sinks the christian religion into a political scheme, calculated for the preservation of peace, or the *outward forms of society*^g, and intended only to make men hang together like a swarm of bees, which at the end of the summer, are to be smoaked out, and buried in the earth. But the essential worth of the christian faith, is its great promise not only of this life, but of *that which is to come*. The good of society, without any thing farther, will sound very flat and dead in the ears of all those whose *hopes are full of immortality*; and is seldom recommended merely of itself, but by your little philosophical dabblers, who either disbelieve the resurrection, or do not expect to receive any advantage by it.

If an *uniformity of profession* be all that is necessary, and if even this be no farther necessary, than for the preservation of peace; then *any national religion*, established and agreed upon by compact and consent, would answer the end as well; since the external regulation of society would not, in this case, depend upon the *kind or quality of the reli-*

^f P. 9.

^g Ibid.

gion, but upon the *uniformity* with which it is *professed*. This sentiment, which savours strongly of infidelity, is nearly related to some others which I shall extract from the celebrated Dr. *Middleton*, who in his angry letter to Dr. *Waterland*^a has the following grave remark upon the *immorality* of *Tindal's* scheme. “Should he then gain his end, and
 “ actually demolish *christianity*, what would
 “ be the consequence ; what the fruit of his
 “ labours, but confusion and disorder, till
 “ some other *traditional religion* could be
 “ settled in its place ; till we had *agreed* to
 “ recal either the *gods* of the *old world*, *Jupi-*
 “ *ter*, *Minerva*, *Venus*, &c. or with the *ido-*
 “ *laters of the new*, to worship *sun*, *moon*, and
 “ *stars* ; or instead of *Jesus*, take *Mahomet*,
 “ or *Confucius*, for the *author of our faith* ?”
 And to the same purpose, *p.* 55. “ But
 “ should we consider it (*christianity*) as the
 “ *best of all other religions*, the best *contrived*
 “ to promote *public peace*, and the *good of*
 “ *society*—then his crime will be aggravated
 “ in proportion—since, as is said above, some
 “ *traditional religion* or other must take place,
 “ as necessary to *keep the world in order*.”

^a P. 51.

I shall

I shall dismiss these sentiments with observing briefly, that a political agreement in the idolatrous republics of *Rome* and *Athens*, and peace and union under Christ in the *houshold of faith*, are things as different in their nature as in their value and importance; the former being wholly built upon temporal considerations, and intended to prevent fellow subjects from cutting one another's throats; though the principles they went upon often made them do it, and were more frequently productive of anarchy, disorder, and bloodshed, than of order, peace, and wholesome discipline. The latter is grounded upon an *uniformity of saving faith*, revealed in mercy to lost mankind, by the righteous judge of all the earth, and implanted in the hearts of the meek and lowly; enabling them to bring forth those uniform and genuine fruits of love and charity to their fellow-redeemed, which will entitle them, as a nation, to the protection of God in this life, and at length exalt them to a place in the glorious assembly of the first-born, in the regions of everlasting bliss and immortality.

But it was his interest to make an *uniformity of belief* a matter so slight and trivial; or, if of any consequence, a *scheme*

quite *impracticable* ; and to recommend, instead of it, that *uniformity of profession* which would be no better than *deliberate hypocrisy* ; that his readers might be the better prepared to receive his opinion concerning *subscriptions* : for as it is the design of his work to deny the consubstantiality and co-eternity of the ever-blessed Trinity, to which doctrines, as they now stand in our creeds and articles, he hath by a subscription, declared his *unfeigned assent* ; it must alarm the honest part of his readers, and put them upon enquiring, what method he has found of quieting his conscience ? Why, truly, a very odd one ; for it is his opinion, that *a man, for prudential reasons, may honestly subscribe and submit to the use of one established form, though he in his private opinion may think another to be better*¹ ; and as for such of his brethren who differ from him, they *consider subscriptions in the same light with the bigotted members of the church of Rome*².

Some writers would be grievously at a loss, if they were not permitted to play the church of *Rome* upon us, when they have nothing else to say for themselves. The *articles* of

¹ P. 9.

² P. 17.

the church of *England* are the best security we have against the errors of the church of *Rome*. When *Arianism* is let in upon us by the breaking down of our ecclesiastical fences, Popery may enter at the same breach: therefore the bigotted members of the church of *Rome* never yet were so blind to their own interest, as to take part with those who are for keeping up the credit of our creeds and subscriptions; but, unless they are solely belied, have co-operated against them in disguise with discontented parties of every denomination. He that considers this fact, will not be tempted to think lightly of moral honesty, or christian fidelity, because a designing writer is pleased to stigmatise such parts of it with the name of popery, as really have nothing to do with popery; or if at all concerned with it, are directly against it. For if we are not *strictly bound* by a subscription to be Christians and Protestants, we may subscribe with our hands, and declare with our lips, and yet in our hearts be very *Papists*, *Jews*, *Mahometans*, or what we please.

I must therefore ask, for what purpose any man subscribes to, what the author calls, an *established form*, that is, to the *book of common prayer*, and all the doctrines therein con-

tained, but to satisfy the church that he *believes them*?

It hath often been insisted upon, and that with the utmost truth and propriety, that our articles are articles of *doctrine*. That kind of *assent* which is given to *christian doctrines*, we call *faith*; therefore, when a person declares his *assent* to these doctrines, we must of necessity understand that he *believes* them; or, that the Church of *England* is so loose in its obligations, as to allow a man to declare one thing, and mean another.

If such prevarications as these should be admitted, how can the state be secure of any man's fidelity, or the king of his allegiance, when the same subtilties which can explain away his ecclesiastical subscription, will prevent the most solemn state oaths from binding him? This is such a violation of truth and honesty, as must give offence to every one who wishes well either to the church or state; for should such loose principles prevail, the most important contracts, nay (I repeat it again) the most solemn oaths, on whatsoever occasion submitted to, may be broken asunder by those who are resolved to have the liberty of turning with every blast.

He

He may laugh, if he pleases, at some who *take occasion, from the form of declaration of assent, to brand those who presume to doubt, or differ from them in any of their IMAGINARY ORTHODOX notions, with the imputation of perjury, or at least of hypocrisy*¹; for whosoever sets up these principles must be guilty of one or both; and though the author were master of as much ridicule as a late *Irish Dean*, any plain man, who will abide by his common sense, might, upon this subject at least, be an overmatch for him.

But he has found out a remedy which he thinks sufficient, if not to remove these difficulties, yet to make him *pretty easy*^m under them; if not to heal the wound, yet to stupify the part in such a manner, as to render it insensible: for though by the express words of the declaration, every clergyman is obliged to declare his *unfeigned assent, and consent to all and every thing contained and prescribed in, and by the book of common prayer*; yet since it is said in the *act of uniformity*, that he shall declare his assent, and consent *to the use of all things contained in the said book*, he may read the declaration with a *latent reference*ⁿ,

¹ P. 17.

^m P. 12.

ⁿ P. 16.

to the intention of the act, and thereby assent to nothing more than *the use of the things*, which, in the essay-writer's opinion, is *very different from assenting to the things themselves* °.

Such *latent references* as take away the meaning of what a man declares plainly with his lips, would agree better with the character of a *Jesuit*, than that of a Protestant Clergyman. However, the reference here pleaded for is not reasonable; and if it were allowed, it would not come up to the author's purpose. It is not a reasonable reference, because it is much more natural, that the sense of the act should be gathered from the words of the declaration, than that the sense of the declaration should be explained by some preparatory expressions in the act; and to guard against this, or any other evasion of the declaration, it is purposely enjoined, that the declaration be made *in those words, and no other*. This was then imagined to be a full and sufficient security, the church not being aware, that any protestant would borrow from the papists the doctrine of *latent references*.

But even granting (which I have neither right nor reason to do) either that these

words were transplanted from the act into the declaration, or that in the declaration he might be indulged with a *latent reference* to them, this would not answer the author's purpose. For in the book of Common Prayer, to the use of which he gives his assent, are there not *creeds* and *articles*, as well as offices, prayers, and suffrages? And how a *creed*, or an article of doctrine, can possibly be *used* otherwise than by being *believed*, I own, I am wholly unable to see.

Besides, to say nothing of creeds and articles, how can any person assent to the *use* of such *prayers* as express supreme adoration to the persons of Christ and the Holy Spirit, when he has persuaded himself, and would persuade others, that such worship is *idolatrous*? It is presumed, what is here said may be sufficient to shew, that the *uniformity of profession* he would contend for, cannot possibly subsist without an uniformity of *faith*: for as the *profession*, which is to be *uniform*, must be a *profession of faith*, the difficulty will always remain, and we shall never be able to get clear of it so long as we have any religion or conscience left.

In short—Our Articles are articles of *doctrine*; and therefore every declaration of
unfeigned

unfeigned assent and consent to them, strictly implies a *belief* of them : when the author, therefore, insinuates, that *a man, for prudential reasons, may honestly subscribe and submit to the use of one established form, though he, in his private opinion, may think another to be better*, he might have said in other words, “ a man may honestly declare that he believes what he does not believe : ” nay, that he believes such things, as no man can be an honest christian without believing, whether he declares it publicly or not.

Before I drop this subject, I must humbly take the leave of remonstrating to the author, that he knows all these shifts and evasions to be insufficient.—For if a clergyman may *profess* what he does not *believe* ; or if a subscription for peace-sake to an established form be all that is required, what makes him so restless? why would he alter the *things themselves*, when he confesses himself to be *pretty easy* in having assented only to *the use* of them? would he set his brethren right in articles of faith? No : that scheme is both *useless* and *impracticable* : yet, in contradiction to this principle, it is the purpose of his whole book to proselyte the church of *Ireland* to his own private sentiments, and (as hath already

already been observed in the *Preface*) he hopes to see them adopted as a *part of the established religion*.

But error is seldom so happy as to be consistent with itself; and from these contradictory principles, when laid together, it appears, that articles of faith, if drawn up according to his fancy, *are* necessary enough; but if published by the general assent of the church, and comprehending the doctrine of the purest ages, they are *not* necessary.

The subject of a *fraudulent subscription* having been largely and fully treated by Dr. *Waterland*, and that in a much better manner than I can ever hope to insist upon it, I refer the reader to his *Case of Arian Subscription*, and the *Supplement* to it, which have, and always may, give general satisfaction upon this point; and if the author had read them, he might have found a much greater difficulty in making himself, as he hath done, so *easy* under these circumstances.

Having thus endeavoured to misrepresent the *subscription* of the Protestant clergy, in order to lessen the obligation of it, he proceeds to set that of the *Nicene* bishops in the same light; that their subscription, when falsely charged with the same frauds, and degraded

graded to a like insignificancy, may keep his own in countenance. He tells us, that at the council of *Nice*, the Emperor Constantine *allowed every one to put their own sense upon the word consubstantial, and not the sense that was intended by the compilers of the creed; and accordingly, Eusebius, Bishop of Cæsarea, though he at first refused subscribing, yet when he was allowed to interpret the word consubstantial, as meaning ONLY, that the Son was not of the same substance with the creatures that were made by him; he then subscribed it, and so, in a little time after, did Arius^p. I will not say, that I suspect all this to be false, because I can prove, that there is not one word of truth in it, from the beginning to end; which the author, perhaps being conscious of, has spared us the trouble of being referred to his authorities.*

For in the first place, the Emperor did not allow any of the subscribers to put a sense upon the word *consubstantial*, different from that intended by the compilers of the creed; and it would have been very strange, if he had instructed the Bishops how to understand a creed of their own compiling, being then

^p P. 10.

but

but a *catechumen*, and neither then nor ever after so assuming as he is here represented. The word (*Homoöusios*) *consubstantial*, was added to the creed by general consent, and is explained, not as meaning ONLY, *that the Son was not of the same substance with the creatures that were made by him*; but, according to the express words of *Eusebius*, which I here give at length, *that the Son of God hath no community with, or resemblance to, created beings; but that in every respect he is like to the Father only, who hath begotten him; and that he does exist of NO OTHER SUBSTANCE OR ESSENCE BUT OF THE FATHER. To this* (adds *Eusebius*) *thus explained, we thought good to give our assent; more especially, because we also knew, that some of the ancient learned and eminent Bishops and writers have made use of this term Homoöusios, in their explications of the divinity of the Father and of the Son. Thus much therefore we have said concerning the creed published (at Nice) to which WE ALL AGREED, not inconsiderately, and without examination, but according to the SENSES GIVEN, which were discussed in the presence of our most pious Emperor, and for the reasons aforementioned received with*
unanimous

unanimous consent †. This is part of a letter written by *Eusebius* * himself; in which there is no appearance either that the subscription of this learned Bishop was fraudulent, or that the Emperor indulged the subscribers with private senses of their own; for it is expressly said, that the Bishops present at the *Nicene* council, subscribed the Creed according to senses *given and agreed upon* publicly; five only, out of three hundred and eighteen,

† Socrat. Hist. Lib. i. chap. 8.

* If the reader desires to see a farther vindication of our *Eusebius*, as Mr. *Whiston* is pleased to call him, let him consult *A second Review of Mr. WHISTON'S Account of primitive Doxologies*, p. 19. The author of this pamphlet, and of the *Review* which preceded it, was Mr. *Thirlby*, a very young man, who exposed the unfair practices and mistakes of Mr. *Whiston*, with great learning and force of argument, so as to reduce the importance of his character in the eyes of the public. Mr. *Thirlby* was supposed to have been very much assisted in his criticisms, by the able and learned Dr. *Asheton*, of *Cambridge*, who could never be prevailed upon to publish any thing as from himself. Dr. *Carve* has an express dissertation upon the supposed *Arianism* of *Eusebius*, at the latter end of the 2d. vol. of his *Historia Literaria*; in which the character of that Father is very sufficiently vindicated against the misrepresentations of *Le Clerc*, a disappointed *Hugonot*, who had strong prejudices against the clergy, and in his notions bordered very nearly upon *Free thinking*.

being

being of the *Arian* opinion. The author's representation of this affair, so different from the real fact, will be a sufficient excuse for us, if we exclaim in the words of bishop *Bull*, *quis cordatus fidem habebit mendacissimo isti hominum generi* ?

But the account now before us will make it necessary to proceed a little farther : for the subscription of *Arius* is mentioned in so artful a manner, and shuffled in with that of *Eusebius*, as to make inexperienced readers believe they were both of the same complexion : whereas *Eusebius* assented to the consubstantiality of the Son in terms sufficiently clear and strong ; but *Arius* under a very detestable subterfuge. We are told, that he wrote down his own heretical doctrine upon a piece of paper, which he concealed in his bosom ; then appeared boldly before the Emperor, subscribed the Creed, and took a solemn oath, that he did really believe—as he had written*. This done, the Emperor dismissed him with these words. “ If thy faith is right, thou hast done well in swearing to it ; but if it be still wicked, and thou hast sworn notwith-

* Def. Fid. Nic. p. 144. § 4.

* Socrat. lib. i. cap. penult.

standing,

“ standing, may God take vengeance on thee
 “ for thy oath *.” It will not be amiss here
 to add the concluding part of *Arius’s* history;
 which I shall relate in the words of the very
 learned and pious Dr. *Cave*, referring my
 reader, for the truth of the relation, to the
 authorities quoted in his margin, most of
 which I have taken the pains to consult for
 myself. The business of *Arius’s* subscription
 was transacted on a *Saturday*; and in virtue
 of it, *Alexander*, the bishop of *Constantinople*,
 was enjoined to receive him the next day to
 communion. But “ that very evening, or,
 “ as others report, the next morning, *Arius*
 “ going through the streets with a pompous
 “ train of his friends and followers, swelled
 “ with the hopes of to-morrow’s triumphs,
 “ was come to a place in *Constantine’s Forum*,
 “ when he found himself necessitated to en-
 “ quire for a place of easement, where his
 “ spirits suddenly failing, the fate of treache-
 “ rous and apostate *Judas* became his portion :
 “ he fell headlong, and bursting asunder in
 “ the midst, immediately expired. *Socrates*

* Εἰ ὁρθὴ σου εἰναι ἡ πίστις, καλῶς ὡμοσᾷς· εἰ δὲ ἀσεβὴς εἰναι ἡ
 πίστις, ἢ καὶ ὡμοσᾷς, ὁ Θεὸς ἐκ τῆς ὀρκῆς κρινεῖ τα κατὰ Θεοῦ.
Athanas. Epist. ad Serap.

“ and others say, that the bowels, and all
 “ the *intestina*, with a vast flux of blood,
 “ issued out. His friends impatiently expect
 “ his return, till it seeming longer than or-
 “ dinary, some went to call him, and *Euse-*
 “ *bius* †, more forward than the rest, re-
 “ proached his backwardness and neglect
 “ both of his friends and himself; but hear-
 “ ing no answer, they went in, and there
 “ found the wretch wallowing in his own
 “ filth and blood. His followers were
 “ strangely surprized with the accident,
 “ which they could not but look upon as a
 “ fatal blow to their cause; though, to cover
 “ as much as might be the shame and terror
 “ of so infamous a death, they fled to their
 “ old refuge of lies and falshood, giving it
 “ out, that his death was procured by sorcery
 “ and magic arts.—Thus died *Arius*, the
 “ great incendiary of the church; and happy
 “ had it been, had his schism and his prin-
 “ ciples died with him ‡.”

I had flattered myself, that the advocates
 of *Arius*'s doctrine would have left his *person*
 to that infamy, from which they have never

† Of *Nicomedeæ*.

‡ Cave's *Lives of the Fathers*, fol. edit. 4. p. 382.

attempted to retrieve it, without giving the cause, in some respect or other, a worse look than it had before. But in the first volume of *Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, translated by Mr. *MacLaine*, minister of the English Church at the *Hague*, there occurred to me the following reflection on the death of this Arch-heretic in a note of the translator:—

“ After having considered this matter with
 “ the utmost care, it appears to me extremely
 “ probable, that this unhappy man was a
 “ victim to the resentment of his enemies,
 “ and was destroyed by poison, or some such
 “ violent method. A blind and fanatical
 “ zeal for certain systems of faith, has in all
 “ ages produced such horrible acts of cruelty
 “ and injustice *.” By what steps the author discovered this *extreme probability*, it doth not appear. The ecclesiastical histories and writings of the fathers, have been open to other readers; and antiquity never furnished them with any evidence whereupon such a conjecture might be grounded. Indeed this writer doth not pretend to any; and it is plain he never found any, by his laying this black indictment in such vague and general

* P. 219. m. y.

terms, "poison, or some such violent method." But the circumstances of his death are not to be reconciled either with poison, or any other method of human violence. He was to all appearance in health and high spirits a few minutes before the accident; and besides, we know of no poison that can expel the entrails. If he had been assassinated, his own followers, by the principal of whom he was attended in the instant after his death, must have discovered marks of violence upon his body; and they wanted neither sagacity nor malice to make the most of any such appearance. Nothing remains then, but the astrology and art-magic of the persecuted *Athanasius*; by imputing it to which, whatever may be pretended by the *Arians* of this age, the *Arians* of that have given us their own testimony that his death was *supernatural*. The circumstances of his death were notorious throughout the whole city of *Constantinople*, and, as *Socrates* adds, in a manner throughout the whole world: the Emperor was very much alarmed, and his own party for a while were confounded, all men looking upon it as an instance of remarkable vengeance immediately fallen upon him from heaven. This, however, is a persuasion of the ancients, which,

as Mr. *Maclaine* thinks, will find “ but little “ credit in these times.” That may be : but then if the incredulity of this age is to be admitted as a test of falsehood, we must do justice on the other side, and admit the credulity of the age (credulous enough on some subjects) as a test of truth : then we may shut up our books, and leave incredulity to determine, that *Arius* did not die by the judgment of God ; while credulity affirms, without reason or evidence, that he was actually murdered by the bloody-minded orthodox. This method, for the brevity of it, will be extremely convenient, and will give an entire new face to the whole history of the ancient church.

The supposed murder of *Arius* then hath nothing to rest upon but the following reflection, which is improperly worded, and very injuriously applied : “ a blind and fanatical “ zeal for certain systems of faith has in all “ ages produced such horrible acts of cruelty “ and injustice.” Systems of *error*, such as the heathen system, the Apostate-Jewish system, the *Arian*, and the *Papal* systems : these, and not that system of *faith* which the fathers of the *Nicene* council had derived from Christ and his Apostles, have been followed with a *blind and fanatical zeal* : and as men *persecute*
others

others only when they cannot *justify themselves*, all these systems being defective in point of reason and argument, could never put up with contradiction, and were therefore productive of the most horrible acts of cruelty and injustice, to which may be added all the excesses of lying and calumniating: while the orthodox faith, from the first planting of christianity, instead of persecuting, hath been exposed in all ages as the object of malice and persecution to other systems. If the *Nicene* christians had torn the flesh of Pagans from their bones, and roasted them alive upon grid-irons, had crucified the Jews, and drawn together five thousand armed soldiers to force *Athanasius* upon the church, as the *Arians* did to drive him out, and assassinate him, &c. &c. they might then have been naturally enough suspected of other acts of cruelty and injustice; though such a suspicion would not be a sufficient warrant with historians of credit, for charging them with any particular act without some particular evidence, of which, in this case, the author hath not produced one syllable; but hath only shewed us the strength of his wishes, and the bias of his inclinations. The seditious practices of *Arius's* life, the impiety and ill effects of his doctrine,

together with the terror and infamy of his death, have reflected so little credit upon his party, that they are tempted to blanch his history at the expence of the orthodox. This however is not to be done by a stratagem so barefaced as that of the learned Mr. *Mosheim's* translator; for although the credulity of some men, in such matters as make *against* the church, is now risen to an extravagant height, there are many still left, who are not quite supple enough to take an author's *bare word* for a *capital* crime, supposed to have been committed *fourteen hundred years before he was born*; and this against all the reason and circumstances of the fact, together with the express testimony of the age in which it happened. If this be the way of improving an history of the church, I shall expect shortly to see some annotator rise up, and do justice to the character of *Judas*: whose death having been attended with the *Arian* symptom of his *bowels gushing out*, on which account *Ephanius* scruples not to observe, that *Arius* died, *καθαρπὸν ὡς Ἰσδὰς πάλαι*, as *Judas* did of old; it may appear *extremely probable* to a person who considers the matter with *the utmost care*, that he died by *poison*, or *some such violent method*, and was a *victim* to the *blind* resentment

ment of St. *Peter*, and the other apostles, in their *fanatical zeal* ! I represent these things, not out of any hatred or contempt for the persons of the *Arians*, but that they may stop a little, and consider, to what groundless, indeed to what iniquitous, shifts they are driven to varnish a bad cause, not to be maintained but by calumny, clamour, or violence; and these are not the marks either of truth, or of christianity.

We are now returning again to the *act of uniformity*; the author of the *Essay* having imagined, that “ these words, *to the use of*, “ were omitted with design,” (in the declaration) “ as a snare to oblige *poor conscientious men* to give up their livings;” and accordingly he tells us, “ there were 1800 persons “ deprived of their livings, rather than submit to the terms prescribed.” Now supposing all this to be true, the cause for which he is pleading can receive no advantage by it, as it never was espoused, to the best of my knowledge, by any one of the persons thus deprived: and I make no doubt but that many of them would rather have submitted to be burnt alive, than subscribe to the doctrines

advanced in an *Essay on Spirit*. But to speak the truth, the characters of these poor conscientious men, and the circumstances of their deprivation, are scandalously misreported, to bring an odium on the *act of uniformity*, and the present *constitution* of the church of *England*. This is the scope of all that superabundance of *charity* affected by this writer ; who ought to be reminded, that when charity is all of it placed in one of the scales, and there is not a drachm left in the other, it is no longer charity, but *partiality* and *injustice*.

The most authentic account of the expulsion of the *Calvinistical* ministers by the *act of uniformity* after the *Restoration*, is delivered down to us by the earl of *Clarendon*, whose credit as an historian is too well established to need any of my recommendations ; and that he was furnished with the best materials cannot be questioned, himself having been the principal agent in the transactions of that time.

The case is related by our author with these three circumstances. 1st. That the number of the deprived ministers was 1800 ; 2dly. That they were *poor conscientious men* ; and 3dly. That the declaration which required their *assent to all things* in the *Common Prayer*,

Prayer, was the reason of their nonconformity.

1. As to their *number*, the noble historian assures us, that the presbyterians themselves, in their petition to the king against the act of uniformity, made it "*five times more than was true*"; and that "the greatest of these " ministers, after some time," (when the contributions of their own faction began to slacken) "subscribed to those very declarations, which they had urged as the greatest " motives to their non-conformity. And the " number was *very small*, and of *very weak* " *and inconsiderable men*, that continued refractory, and received no charge in the " church".

2. The following extract will shew how far they deserved the character of *poor* and *conscientious*. "There was scarce a man in " that number, who had not been so great a " promoter of the rebellion, or contributed " so much to it, that they had no other title " to their lives but the king's mercy; and " there were very few amongst them, who " had not come into the possession of the " churches they now held, by the expulsion

^a Contin. of *Clarendon's Life*, p. 157.

^v Ibid. p. 161.

“ of the orthodox ministers who were law-
 “ fully possessed of them, and who being by
 “ their imprisonment, poverty, and other
 “ kinds of oppression and contempt during
 “ so many years, departed this life, the usurp-
 “ ers remained undisturbed in their livings,
 “ and thought it now the highest tyranny to
 “ be removed from them, though for offend-
 “ ing the law, and disobedience to the go-
 “ vernment*.”

Then thirdly, though it be true that they were offended by the declaration mentioned by the author, it is false that this was the whole ground of their non-conformity, or, as he expresses it, the *snare* that *obliged* these *poor conscientious men to give up their livings*; for the act of uniformity contained another declaration, which required them to renounce their *solemn league and covenant*; and their zeal to this bloody engagement was at least as strong as their aversion to the liturgy. This appears from the words of their own inflammatory exhortations to their proselytes, whose old animosities, then very likely to subside, they endeavoured to keep alive by assuring them, that “ they could not, with a good
 “ conscience, subscribe either the one, or the

* P. 157.

“ other

“ other declaration ; they could not say, that
 “ they did assent or consent in the first, nor
 “ declare in the second, that there remained
 “ *no obligation from the covenant*.” For a
 farther account of these men, and the times
 in which they lived, I refer the reader to the
 earl of Clarendon’s history of his own life ; a
 work which of late years hath done so much
 honour to the *Oxford* press. He will there
 see the workings of different factions, and the
 effects of different principles, on the peace,
 order, and prosperity of the commonwealth.
 I mention this work of *Clarendon* in a more
 particular manner, because I saw it lately de-
 clared in a newspaper by some outrageous
 libertine, who being employed in propagating
 the old rebellious principles of that age, would
 have all their horrible consequences buried in
 oblivion, that his writings ought to be *burnt*
by the hands of the common hangman. In re-
 turn to which, I shall only say for myself,
 that if any production of mine should ever be
 worthy of so great an honour, I could wish it
 might live and die (by any kind of death)
 with the writings of the earl of *Clarendon*.

I have already taken some notice of a sarcasm upon the orthodoxy of this church, which, in the judgment of the *Essayist*, is no more than *imaginary orthodoxy*. How far the reformers of our liturgy were carried by their *imagination*s, he does not expressly say : but from the temper of his phraseology, and the latitude of his expression, it is easy enough to foresee, that there will be something new and curious, when he comes to explain his sentiments concerning *orthodoxy*, together with its opposites, *heresy* and *schism*.

First then, for his *orthodoxy* ; which, according to the common sense of the word, is constituted by the established religion of any country : and hence it comes to pass, that a person may be esteemed as very orthodox in England or Ireland, who would be deemed as an heretic at Rome, or in other countries *. *Orthodoxy*, then, is nothing fixed and stated, but changes its nature according to the different temper of the climate it resides in, and, *Chamelcon*-like, can assume any colour it chances to sit upon, and still be as good *orthodoxy* as it was before. This, it seems, is

* Ded. p. 23, 24.

gathered from the *common sense* of the word : but if what is here taken as the common sense of orthodoxy, be an *erroneous* or *abused sense*, nothing but error can be inferred from it. And that it is such, must be evident to every one who is able to construe the *Greek* (ορθοδοξία) or knows that in the primitive ages, it was used only to denote *the right opinion*, that is, the Christian faith in general, as received in the Catholic church planted by the apostles, which, in their days, was one and the same all the world over ; and none but the faithful members of this *one* communion were termed *orthodox*. To this purpose Theodoret observes, τῷ ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀποστολικῶν δογματῶν ἀγωνιζομένῳ, ορθοδοξίας ὀνομα^z, *we call him orthodox, who earnestly contends for the apostolic doctrines*, that is, *the faith once delivered to the saints* by the Apostles. Thus also, when it is said of the three thousand converted *Jews*^z, that *they continued stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship*, it is perfectly the same, as if they had been declared, in one word, to have been *orthodox* : and therefore, every particular church now subsisting in the world, is *more* or *less* orthodox, in proportion as it

^z Pref. ad Dial.

^z Acts ii. 42.

approaches nearer to, or is more remote from, the purity of the apostolic times.

But, on the contrary, if any point of doctrine, whether right or wrong, may, by a strange abuse of the word, be esteemed *orthodox*, because it makes a part of the *established religion of any country*; then the author's definition, if admitted and applied, will prove, that any particular church may be *orthodox*, where it is *heterodox*; which is, what we commonly call, a contradiction in terms. And yet, proceeding upon a fallacy so easily detected, he descants, through twenty pages, upon the crime of *heresy*; measuring it all the way by this false rule of equivocal orthodoxy, and setting it forth as an insignificant deviation from any established form, which, as it happens, may be sometimes right, and sometimes wrong. I will run over these pages, and extract in short, as well as I can, the sum of that doctrine they contain.

Accordingly, I find, that six of them^a may be reduced to the following propositions—The Christianity of the Apostles was, by the blind Scribes and Pharisees of the *Jews*, called *heresy*—and therefore, *it is possible that an heretic may be in the right*.

^a From p. 22 to 28.

No ; nothing can possibly be inferred from hence, but that a person who is *in the right*, may be *falsely called* an heretic by those who are *in the wrong*.

In the course of these observations upon heresy, he is pleased to produce a text from *St. Paul*, in which, by the assistance of a large comment, the Apostle is tortured till he delivers a very singular account of this crime, together with the reasons for which the church is empowered to inflict a punishment upon those that are guilty of it : an account, so foreign from the purpose of that glorious instrument of the Holy Spirit, that I dare be confident, he would rather have suffered martyrdom, than have submitted to deliver it. The text is this—*A man that is an heretic, after the first and second admonition, reject : knowing that he that is such, is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself*^b. From which the author presumes in his comment, that an heretic is such, not for the sake of any destructive opinion he maintains in opposition to the truth, and to the extreme peril of his own soul, but that *he sinneth, by persevering therein after admonition ; and that*

^b Tit. iii. 10, 11.

this perverseness of his will, not the error of his judgment, is the cause and foundation of his excommunication.*

So that it is the *admonition* an heretic receives from the church, which makes him become guilty of that very crime for which he is *admonished* ! and he commences a complete heretic immediately upon his excommunication, and not before : because, if it is the ecclesiastical censure which renders him guilty, his guilt must increase with the severity of that censure ; and when the censure hath arisen to its full growth, the crime likewise must have done the same. But a small attention to this matter will enable us to perceive, that here we have a false account of *schism*, instead of a true account of *heresy* ; and that upon this the author proceeds in what follows.

For it is declared moreover in these words of St. *Paul*, that an heretic is *self-condemned* ; at which passage we are directed by a very judicious marginal reference, to *Acts* xiii. 46, where *Paul* and *Barnabas* tell the *Jews*, upon their rejecting the Christian faith, that they *judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life*.

This therefore was supposed by those pious men, who made the reference, to contain that very sentence of condemnation, which an heretic passes upon himself: but the Essay-writer, agreeable to his usual method of taking the perspective by the wrong end, diminishes it down to a petty conviction only, of his wilful *perseverance in opposition to the church*; which exposition does not touch upon the meaning of the text; since, in other words, it will stand thus—*An heretic is sensible that he is condemned by the church*—whereas, on the contrary, the Apostle has asserted in terms, that he is *condemned by himself*; that is, he is sensible of his guilt, and accused by his own conscience. From the whole of what our author hath said upon this subject, we may collect this unscriptural definition of heresy—It is an offence, not against the revealed will of God, and the concerns of eternity, but against the will of man, and the outward forms of society; not against the faith, but against the church that abides by it. Which, in effect, is to suggest, that the church sanctifies the faith; whereas, on the other hand, it is always taken for granted, that the faith sanctifies the church.

And what are the motives which excite him thus to diminish this vice, and improve it, if possible, by *speaking smooth things, and prophesying deceits* about it, almost into a christian virtue? Why it seems the words, *schismatic* and *heretic*, are sounds, which, ever since the days of Popery, occasion wondrous horror in the ears of the vulgar^a. And as he is apprehensive, that many of his brethren, upon discovering his attempt to corrupt the doctrines of the church, and disturb the peace of it, will load him with these opprobrious names, he esteems it his interest to explain away their true meaning, and to brand those with the name of superstitious and papistical vulgar, who shall apply to him, in their proper sense, such nauseous appellations. By this means, whatever noise they may chance to make in *his ears*, he may contemplate his own interpretation of them, and continue to enjoy his repose.

I cannot better obviate these dangerous insinuations, than by setting down a true description of *heresy*, as it stands in the Holy Scriptures; which being dictated by the infallible Spirit of God, and written before the

^a P. 19.

days of popery, cannot be charged with inflaming the account of any vice, or of adulterating its own divine truth with any hot and impure spirits, distilled therefrom in after-ages, by the superstitious church of *Rome*. To proceed then—

2 Pet. ii. 1. *There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies*, or (αἵρεσις ἀπωλείας) *heresies of destruction*. Heresies, therefore, are *damnable*; that is, they lead their advocates and propagators to *destruction*; and in general they are *privily brought in*, (παρυσταξιν) they are carried round about, and introduced at some private entrance; they do not make their approach with that undisguised honesty, which fears no discovery, but steal into the household of faith—under the masque of conscience.

The apostle goes on—even *denying the Lord that bought them*—yea, these *false teachers* sha^{ll} to complete their guilt, *even dare to deny the Lord that bought them*; either by rejecting the ransom he hath condescended to pay for them, or by disowning that he, who paid that ransom, was *the Lord*.

The remaining part of the verse declares, that they *shall bring upon themselves swift*

destruction. Though for a short time they may escape the terror of an earthly tribunal, yet the eye of God can penetrate into the inmost recesses of their hearts; and his arm will at length drag them forth from their hiding-places, to appear at the bar of his tribunal, whose mercy and long-suffering they have abused and affronted: though they may delude themselves with a vain presumption, that they can contradict God, and yet be in the right; that the matter they are upon is *barely speculative*, and such as God careth not for; yet if their crime be such as the apostle here means to describe, their *judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.*

In 1 *Tim.* iv. 1. Heretics, or those who depart from the truth, and solicit others to *follow their pernicious ways*, are called *seducing spirits*, or persons actuated by that original seducer, who first tempted man to apostatize from the wisdom of God, and to follow his own lascivious fancy, in contradiction to an express command of his Maker: their heresies are termed *doctrines of devils*, invented by the adversary, and set up as rivals to the pure and saving doctrines of *Christ*; and those
who

who set forth and propagate such doctrines, are declared to be *ministers of Satan**, artfully substituting and diligently preaching his word of death, instead of the *word of life*; nay, proceeding so far as to call the former by the name of the latter, that they may render it the more palatable, and tempt their hearers to swallow down such poisonous impurities with greediness.

This I take to be the true account of heresy, because the Scripture gives it me, and because I find it insisted upon as such by all the pious writers of the ancient church, now so much despised and neglected: and if it is the true, surely we ought to tremble at seeing this destructive evil artfully recommended to the world, under the soft phrases of *an opinion barely speculative, a different mode of thinking!* If *an heretic* means no more than *one of a different opinion from the majority*†, whether that majority think right or wrong; if, I say, this reasoning be true, then the Scriptures are false; and it is of no importance whether a man be a christian or a mahometan.

As I have alluded to the term, *barely speculative*, it may not be amiss more fully to

* 2 Cor. xi. 15.

† P. 32.

remark this *writer's* strange misapplication of it: for by *opinions barely speculative*, he would have us understand the chief and fundamental mysteries of the christian faith; nay, that very root and stock, from whence groweth all moral obligation to us as *Christians*, all strength and comfort in this world, and all our hope of everlasting salvation in the next. All this, as depending upon the *doctrine of the Trinity*, is, it seems, nothing but a mere lifeless theory, an empty subject for the mind to exercise its curiosity upon, and concerning which, it may think and imagine for itself with as great freedom, as it does about any baseless and airy fabric of modern *metaphysics*. But it is evident, that the Scriptures give no warrant to this distinction of *speculative* and *practical* duties; for when the *Jews* put the following question to *Christ*—*What shall we do that we might work the works of God?* his answer was—*This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.* Where then is the difference between faith and works?

Since the principles of the christian faith, in common with those of all other religions, are (in the author's opinion) *barely speculative*, he seems to wonder that *men should be*
more

more displeased with one another for any difference of opinion about them, than for their being of different sizes or complexions; and observes, that for this, no reason in general can indeed be assigned². The fact, however, is not to be disputed: and that we may not be at a loss for the reasons, let us first consider the case of the *heterodox*. Truth and falshood differ in themselves as really as light and darkness. In common life, this difference discovers itself in their effects. The Gospel assures us, that a *corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit*; therefore it is impossible that error in religion can be productive of peace, order, charity, and subjection for conscience sake; or that it can cease to be productive of hatred, malice, rage, and cruelty, so far as it hath an opportunity of following its inclinations. Bigotry to Paganism made the heathens persecute the christians, because the fabulous characters and attributes of *Jupiter, Mars, Bacchus, and Venus*, could not be vindicated by other methods. Among christians, persecution never found encouragement till they had errors to support by it. Papists do not burn a protestant because he disbe-

² Ded. p. 33.

lieves the Trinity, or the Incarnation, but because he denies the *corporal presence*, the *worship of images*, the vicarial character of the *Bishop of Rome*, &c. &c. In a word, truth defends itself by *reason* and *patient suffering*; error by *violence* and *cruelty*; and so there is a very particular reason why men, who are grossly mistaken, are *displeased* with others who *differ from them in opinion*.

There is also some displeasure on the part of the *orthodox*, for which they are not to be blamed, unless it degenerates into malice and hatred. Our blessed Saviour was pleased to express his approbation of the church of *Ephe-sus* in these words—*Thou canst not bear them which are evil; and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not; and hast found them lyars*^a. St. John hath instructed us, that *whosoever abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, is not to be received by us into our houses, neither are we to bid him God speed*, (that is, we are not in any wise to encourage his attempt, or promote the success of it) *for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds*¹. And our blessed Lord admonished his apostles, that if any one *neglect*

^a Rev. ii. 2.

¹ 2 John ix. 10, 11.

to hear the church, he should be unto them as an heathen man and a publican ; adding withal (on a very proper occasion) that divine authority upon which the church is to proceed—*Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven*^k. It is now thought expedient that we should entertain very moderate and qualified sentiments about such passages as these ; yet, we must not forget, that in the Scriptures there are such.

Seeing, therefore, it is absolutely requisite, that there should be a proper distinction preserved between such as are humble and believing, and such as are refractory and unbelieving, lest by encouraging the guilty, the innocent should partake of their crimes, and help to spread the infection ; it is somewhat strange that the *Reverend Essay-writer* should spend several pages in the unnatural endeavour of bringing about a coalition between *Christians, Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics* ; not considering, that amongst such, it is impossible there should be any community of sentiment, or any hearty reconciliation. For if those who are on the right side are quiet,

^k Matt. xviii. 17, 18.

and at rest, those on the wrong are, through the implacable spirit of him that *from the beginning was a murderer*, so restless and impatient of contradiction, that they never will, or can be; and for the truth of this, I might appeal to the testimony of all ages.

There is a very plain rule, of resting upon the *most certain warrants of Holy Scripture*, and of having such a degree of charity for mankind, as to encourage none of them in sin; but this the author will not attend to, choosing rather to descant upon *fire and faggot*, as the sanction of human appointments in the church of *Rome*; as if there could be no difference between just reprehension for sin, and unjust persecution for righteousness sake: and on the other side, he takes great pains to recommend such a species of charity, as would obliterate the distinction between good and evil. His own charity, however, hath not withheld him from some very absurd and unjust reflections, of which the following is a specimen: for as the *conduct of mankind* (it should be *of Christians*) is quite *otherways* in this respect; that is, as they sometimes disagree, and will have *no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness*, but rather reprove them; he thinks this can be
attributed

attributed to nothing but a vicious pride in our natures, which gives us an aversion for every one that differs in opinion from us.

If every man was left to make his own religion, and religion were nothing but *opinion*, then every man would have a right to be indulged in his own way : but if God hath published a religion from heaven, and commanded all men to leave their own inventions, and submit to what is revealed, the case alters very much. Then any man who troubles a christian society with the irreligious productions of his own brain, is both a blameable and a dangerous person. It may be observed in the phrase of this writer, that the Devil *differs in opinion* from many Christians : he hates the doctrines of the *incarnation*, the *satisfaction*, the *adoration of Jesus Christ*, and *submission to the will of God*. For these differences of opinion we may dislike the devil without any breach of charity. And should any man appear to think just as the devil does, and to speak of Jesus Christ and his redemption with more contempt than the devil ever dared to do in his own person, we should certainly be excusable if we expressed an aversion for his opinions : though every good man would, at
the

the same time, commiserate his condition, and pray for his repentance and restitution.

If it were impossible to *rebuke* men *sharply* for their wickedness and infidelity, without being guilty of a *vicious pride*, we should find ourselves obliged to charge some degree of this vicious pride upon the *Son of God* himself; who, while his heart overflowed with tenderness for an unbelieving and abandoned nation, could yet say to them, *Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?* And again, *Ye are of your father the devil.* St. Paul in like manner said to the *Jews* who refused to hear him, *Your blood be upon your own heads*; and, on another occasion, he hath this severe reflection concerning some, who by false doctrines made Christ of none effect: *I would they were even cut off, which trouble you.*

St. Ignatius, cautioning the Christians of *Smyrna* against some who preached a doctrine now maintained by the *Quakers*, speaks in this plain manner: “I arm you beforehand against
“ certain *beasts in the shape of men*¹, whom
“ you must not only not receive, but if it be

¹ Θηρία, τῶν ἀνθρωπομορφῶν.

“ possible,

“ possible, must not meet with : only you
 “ must *pray for them*, that if it be the will of
 “ God, they may repent, which yet will be
 “ very hard.” No Christian will presume to
 say, that *Christ*, or *St. Paul*, or the primitive
Martyrs, were either mistaken in the notion,
 or deficient in the practice, of true charity :
 therefore charity doth not consist in a scepti-
 cal indifference toward all opinions, but may
 stand well enough with some of that zeal,
 which ill men are always ready enough to
 exert in opposition to the *faith once delivered*
to the saints. It may seem to argue a spirit
 of benevolence and liberality in the eyes of
 the ignorant, if we pass over all the false opi-
 nions of the world : but it is every man’s duty
 to take care, lest while he is affecting humility
 toward his fellow-creatures, he should be so
 saucy to his Maker as to assume a dispensing
 power over the divine laws ; and by flattering
 other men in their sins, should be made a par-
 taker in the guilt and punishment of them,
 while he hath already too many of his own to
 answer for.

In this dedicatory introduction to his Essay,
 our author hath several *pleas*, (*arguments* I
 will not call them) by which he would coun-
 tenance his plan for reforming the doctrine of
 the

the Trinity, as it stands at present in our creeds and articles. It remains, therefore, that I extract these, and give them their answers separately, according to that order in which they occur.

Plea I. “ If the church be not infallible
 “ any more than the state, why may not that
 “ be amended as well as the state? And why
 “ should we be more afraid of breaking the
 “ peace of the church than of the state? the
 “ peace of the one being full as necessary to
 “ be preserved, as the peace of the other^a. ”

No just parallel-can, I think, be drawn between the fallibility, or infallibility of the church, and of the state, since they are not directed by the same rule, and are conversant about matters greatly differing from each other: the one about invariable truths, which concern the everlasting happiness of man, and are determined by divine revelation; the other about national or political principles of its own devising, which, so far as they are built upon human authority, or national compact, may be varied at pleasure, as the different exigencies of times and occasions shall require; so far as they partake, in common with the

^a P. 21, 22.

ecclesiastical rule, of divine authority, these are as unalterable as the other. If, therefore, it can be clearly proved, that any *human errors* have crept into the church, any positions *contradicting* the word of truth, let them, in God's name, be reformed: but as to the essential articles, or substance of the christian faith, it must for ever remain as the Scriptures have fixed it.

Plea II. “ I am under less apprehension
 “ for the church than for the state; for as to
 “ the christian religion in general, we have
 “ the sure word of prophecy, that the gates
 “ of hell shall not prevail against it; and as
 “ to particular establishments, I should apprehend, that the freer they were from
 “ errors, the more likely they would be to
 “ stand.” It is true, a candlestick, with a light burning in it, may be removed from one part of the house to another, without extinguishing the light; but yet the apartment, from which it is removed, having no light but what it received from it, will be left in the dark. The light of christianity will always burn *somewhere* till the end of the world; but no particular church or nation can from this

prophecy receive any well grounded encouragement to tamper with the faith, through a vain presumption of its continuance, although the members of that church, under the specious pretence of snuffing the candle, are continually endeavouring to put it out. Suppose the christian religion, when expelled from *Great Britain*, should settle whole and entire in the city of *Amsterdam*, it would give us but cold comfort to reflect, that though the christian religion *in particular* had left us, yet the christian religion *in general* was still subsisting somewhere in the world.

Before any *particular establishment* is freed from its errors, we must ask, who is to judge of those errors? A council of learned and pious men, assembling in the fear of God, or one solitary objector, who is pleased to think that such reformers complied so far with *the humour of the times* in which they lived, as not to have effected a *thorough reformation*? If we admit the *author's* judgment, we shall have that very doctrine (with many more) expunged as an error, by a departure from which, a way was prepared in the eastern churches for that desolation brought upon

them by the imposture of *Mahomet*; which prevailed only in those parts of the christian world where *Arianism* had first been admitted.

Plea III. “ It is manifest, that before the
“ reformation took place, the same arguments
“ were then made use of, against any in-
“ novations in religion, that are now; and
“ all alterations were as much declaimed
“ against¹. ”

Hence this *writer* means to insinuate, that as a reformation in religion was once made, against an *unreasonable opposition*, and the church freed from its errors, a reformation (how wildly soever it be demanded, or reasonably proposed) ought to be made again; that is, there always may be a reformation of a reformation; and because the church, at the time here mentioned, had many errors, and was cleared of them: therefore she must have many more, and may be cleared of them again. At which rate of arguing, a man may easily prove that *Mary Magdalen* had fourteen devils; and that because seven were cast out, seven more must have staid behind.

¹ P. 47.

Plea IV. “ If a storm should arise, the
 “ church may run a risque of having that
 “ tree torn up by the roots, which might
 “ have been saved by a little pruning^r. ”

Whence is this storm to arise? not from any *Popish* power ; because then the most advisable method would be, not to lop and to *prune*, but to engraft fresh branches upon the old stock. It is therefore to arise from the opposite quarter ; that is, either from the dissenters, or such members of the church as are corrupted with the *Arian* opinions. The author, when he penned this suggestion, forgot himself a little : otherwise he would not have put so much *storm* and *tempest* into the composition of his friends.

But what can he mean by *a little pruning* ? If the *tree* here spoken of is the *Christian Faith*, at present growing in the church of *England*, the doctrine of a *Trinity in Unity* is the *root* of it : and whoever peruses our *Liturgy*, will find this doctrine so closely interwoven with all the forms and offices of it, that the *Reformation* for which he is pleading can never take effect, till the tree is cut up by the

root. If this should be our method of *pruning*, we shall have little to fear afterwards: for when his *tempestuous* friends come to rip and rend, there will be nothing left for them to do.

Plea V. “The most proper method that
“could be taken to render the church of *Ireland* truly *catholic*, would be—to open the
“gates of its communion as wide as was consistent with the gospel of Christ.”

How wide the *author* thinks that to be cannot exactly be determined, till he speaks more explicitly: but we ought to be very cautious how we enter upon this *widening* scheme, for fear of making a fatal mistake—for *strait is the gate which leadeth unto life*; as on the contrary, *wide is the gate which leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat*’. It may be said, without giving offence to any sincere believer of the churches of *England* and *Ireland*, that if they were opened as *wide* as some of our modern reformers would have them, they might pretty much resemble those described by the poet,

^s Ded. p. 62.

^t Matth. vii. 13, 14.

—The gates wide open stood,
 That with extended wings a banner'd host
 Under spread ensigns marching, might pass
 through
 With horse and chariots rank'd in loose
 array^a.

As to the *Catholicism* here proposed, it is merely ideal, and all the wit of man could never reduce it to practice. For no church can subsist as such without a common form of public service; and this service must be built upon the *doctrines* received. But I desire to know, how it would be possible to frame such a service as should agree to the contrary doctrines of the *Arians*, *Socinians*, and *orthodox* Christians? what is *religion* to some, is *idolatry* to others. I say nothing of the *Presbyterians*, *Anabaptists*, *Independents*, and other forms which were found so irreconcilable with each other in the age of *Catholicism*, when the gates of our communion were torn off their hinges by the Puritan faction. The experience of that age, as the distractions of it are described by *Edwards*, an honest Puritan, in his *Gangrena*, ought to con-

^a Par. Lost, B. II. l. 384.

vince our *Catholic* experimentalists, that their principles, instead of uniting men, do sow the seeds of discord so effectually, that all religion would either demolish itself, or be soon laughed out of the world, if it were to exist in the motley forms of the last century ; when all the same pleas which the Presbyterians had used against the church, were turned against themselves, and they had the mortification to hear the *Independents* publicly praying, that the *Presbytery might be removed, that Christ's kingdom* (meaning their own way) *might be set up* *. The dissenters, therefore, if they know their own interest, will think themselves more happy and secure under a toleration, than any part of them could be under an establishment. They may *all* be tolerated, but they cannot all have the establishment : and an *equal* claim to it could only set them together by the ears, as it did before ; for which themselves could find no remedy but the *Restoration*.

Plea VI. ' The preface to our *Book of Common Prayer* declares, that " *the particular forms of divine worship, and the rites and ceremonies appointed to be used therein,*

* Edwards's *Gangr.* Part I. p. 35.

“ *being things in their own nature indifferent*
 “ *and alterable, and so acknowledged, it is but*
 “ *reasonable, that upon weighty and important*
 “ *considerations, according to the various exi-*
 “ *gencies of times and occasions, such changes*
 “ *and alterations may be made therein, as to*
 “ *those that are in place and authority should,*
 “ *from time to time, seem either necessary or*
 “ *expedient.*”

This passage is taken by the Essay-writer in as large and unlimited a sense, as if those pious men, who reviewed our excellent Liturgy, had thereby insinuated a permission to change the essential articles of faith therein contained, according to the various humours of every age; or to alter the *doctrine of the Trinity*, &c. in such a manner, as that the Liturgy might always wear a garb suitable to the cut of the times. Their concession will not countenance *his* proposed method of reformation, unless it be made to appear, that by such *forms of divine worship, rites, and ceremonies*, as are *in their own nature indifferent and alterable*, they meant *Creeeds, Articles*, and all other *essentials* of the *Liturgy*; for these are the points wherein he would contend for an alteration. But this is such an indulgence, as those faithful and judicious men

men well knew they had neither a right to grant, nor a liberty to accept of; and if they are permitted to speak for themselves, they will soon be cleared of the accusation here brought against them. For nothing can more expressly set aside such a loose acceptation of their words, or more justly characterize all our reforming adventurers, than the lines which immediately follow the above passage, extracted from their Preface to the *Book of Common Prayer*. Their observation is this:

“ Accordingly we find, that in the reigns of
 “ several princes of blessed memory since the
 “ reformation, the church, upon just and
 “ weighty considerations, her thereunto mov-
 “ ing, hath yielded to make such alterations
 “ in *some particulars*, as in their respective
 “ times were thought convenient: yet so, as
 “ that the *main body* and *essentials* of it (as
 “ well in the *chiefest materials*, as in the
 “ frame and order thereof) have still con-
 “ tinued the same unto this day; and do yet
 “ stand firm and unshaken, notwithstanding
 “ all the vain attempts, and impetuous as-
 “ saults made against it, by such men as are
 “ *given to change*, and have always disco-
 “ vered a greater regard to their own *private*
 “ *fancies* and interests, than to that duty
 “ they

“ they owe to the public.” They likewise inform us, that after the restoration, “ divers
 “ pamphlets were published against the *Book*
 “ *of Common Prayer*, by those who, under
 “ the usurped powers, had made it their busi-
 “ ness to render the people disaffected there-
 “ unto ; the old objections were mustered up,
 “ with the addition of some new ones, to
 “ make the number swell.” And that at the
 time of their review, “ of the sundry altera-
 “ tions proposed to them, they rejected all
 “ such as were either of dangerous conse-
 “ quence (as *secretly striking at some esta-*
 “ *blished doctrine*, or laudable practice of the
 “ church of *England*, or indeed of the whole
 “ Catholic church of *Christ*) or else, of no
 “ consequence at all, but utterly frivolous
 “ and vain.”

It might have been as prudent, therefore, in the author, not to have meddled with this Preface ; which is directed throughout against all such changeable minds, “ as seek occasion
 “ of cavil, or quarrel against the Liturgy of
 “ the church.”

Every reader who hath considered the extravagant latitude of his reasonings against the present establishment of the church, will scarcely believe that he means to stop at

Arianism, when he commends that *freedom of thinking*, which he supposes to have been promoted by the legislature, *not only since the reformation, but even since the revolution*[†]: and likewise what sort of principles they are, from whence that air of triumph arises wherewith he observes, that the *eyes of mankind have* (of late) *been greatly opened*[‡]. If their eyes are opened in such a manner, as to make them see nothing but error instead of truth, and to know what God is, better than he himself does; happy would it be for them, if they were still blind. But I have such an opinion of my brethren and countrymen, as to think, that many of them at least, whatever they *may be* in time to come, are not *yet* persuaded, that knowledge, and wisdom, and judgment, is to be found no where but amongst those who have forgotten their *Catechism*; and, that such a suggestion as this may now, and always, be a *slander* against the greater half of them, is all the harm I wish them.

We are now entering upon the work itself, the *Essay on Spirit*; which, I presume, is so called by the author, because, in the beginning of this work, he lays down a short system

† Ded. p. 63.

‡ Ibid.

of metaphysical speculations, concerning the nature and essence of God, the Spirit of the world, or *anima mundi*, the operations and essence of the soul of man, together with the existence and power of angels, or created spirits. But before he hath advanced many steps into this system, he strikes into objections against the divinity of *Christ* and the *Holy Spirit*; works up his own metaphysical principles with what is revealed in the Old and New Testament; and then cements the whole together with those impure traditions of the *Rabbies*, which originally made the word of God of *none effect*, and were insisted upon by the *Jews*, after their dispersion, on purpose to deface the doctrines of the primitive Christian church.

It is not my intention to confront his system with another of the like nature; in doing which, I should only *fight as one that beateth the air*; and instead of shewing his errors, nothing could hereby be manifested but my own weakness. I shall therefore meddle with this system no farther than as it interferes with revealed truth; and shall remark, as I go along, his abuse of Heathen learning, and misapplication of the Holy Scriptures; whence it will appear, that his speculations, however
new

new they may be thought, are very ancient, and of *Pagan* original.

If, in the course of these remarks, I should sometimes be obscure and immethodical, I hope it will be chiefly owing to the author's less perspicuous manner of treating his subject: for when I peruse his book, I confess myself often puzzled to perceive the connection; and his arguments are frequently so dispersed, that it is no easy matter to collect them. However, that I may the more readily be understood, I shall divide my answer into several chapters: the *first* of which shall comprehend his notions concerning the nature and essence of God, the Spirit of the universe, and the human soul—the *second*, those relating to the existence and power of created spirits—the *third*, his objections against the divinity of the *Son*—the *fourth*, his objections against that of the *Holy Spirit*—the *fifth*, the extent and validity of his conclusion—the *sixth*, his enquiry into the sentiments of the primitive Fathers—the *seventh*, his misapplication of the Heathen *Trinities*—the *eighth* and last, his remarks upon the *Athanasian* and *Nicene* Creeds.

CHAP. I,

In which his Notions concerning the Nature and Essence of God, the Spirit or Instinct of the Universe, and the Soul of Man, are considered.

IT must give us some surprise, to see the first scene of this *Essay* open with an *atheist* giving his definition of *God*. The author tells us, “ The opinion of *Spinoza* “ was, that there is no other *substance* in “ nature but *God*: that modes cannot sub- “ sist, or be conceived, without a substance : “ that there is nothing in nature but modes “ and substances: and that therefore every “ thing must be conceived as subsisting in “ *God*.” By which, if I am so happy as to understand him, he means—that as there is nothing in nature but *modes*, or various modifications of action; and as these *modes* cannot subsist without a *substance*, therefore all the motion or action which appears in nature, must proceed from the intimate presence of

* *Essay*, p. 1.—*Spin. Op. Posth. Eth. par. I. p. 12.*

God's substance, expanded through the universe. Which opinion of *Spinos*a, hath been supposed to terminate in *atheism* ; because it asserts in other words, that the universal substance of *Nature* is *God* : which substance being really nothing more than inanimate matter, and the modes therein observable owing to material or *second* causes, under the direction and influence of the *supreme* : this opinion leaves us without any God at all, except that which all idolaters have allowed, *the creature rather than the Creator*.

How far the author's opinion coincides with this of *Spinos*a, will appear as we proceed. For according to him, " It may be asserted, " that there is in nature but one self-existent " being, subsistence, or substance, which, by " way of eminence, may therefore be called " *the substance*, or, figuratively and comparatively speaking, the *only being, subsistence, or substance in nature* ^b." As to the first part of this sentence, we grant that there is but one *self-existent being* ; but it cannot follow from hence, that there is but one *subsistence* or *substance* ; because a *substance* (except when it is improperly used for the word

^b P. 2.

essence) always implies something *material*; whereas a *being* may be either *material* or *immaterial*. However, to make this somewhat plausible, he “would be understood to mean “by these three words (*being*, *subsistence*, “and *substance*) one and the same thing^c :” that when the words are granted to be synonymous, whatever is proved of a *being*, may hold good of a *substance*. I take notice of this, because, in the next page, the Scripture is introduced giving its verdict in favour of this opinion. “When *Moses* (says he) enquired of God, by what name he should “make him known to the children of *Israel*, “*God* said, thus shalt thou say—I AM hath “sent me unto you—which is rendered by the “*Sept.* εγω ειμι ο ων, *I am he that is*, or that “exists; as if, comparatively speaking, there “was no other *being* or *existence* but God^d.” In this comment, the *Essay-writer* hath dropt the words *subsistence* and *substance*, and introduced only those of *being* and *existence*: but as he would be understood to mean the same thing by all of them, we have his own authority for substituting one for the other as we think proper; and then his paraphrase upon

^c P. 2.^d P. 3.

אני הוא שיש will be, “ I am he that *subsists* ;
 “ as if there were no other *substance* but *God*.”
 He adds, that “ from this passage it probably
 “ was, that *Plato* borrowed his notion of the
 “ name of *God*, when he asserted that the
 “ word *אני, est*, is solely applicable to the na-
 “ ture of *God*. And from him it probably
 “ was, that the word *אני, thou art*, was written
 “ on the door of the *Delphic* temple*.” But
 the original text can, I apprehend, afford no
 room either for this comment, or for intro-
 ducing these Heathen parallels. It is *אֱהוּה*
אֱהוּה אֱשֶׁר, where the *Hebrew* root of the
 verb *אֱהוּה I am*, is *הוּוה* *הוּוה* *HOVAH* to be ; from
 whence is plainly derived the verb *יְהוּוה* *Jeho-*
vah, which, when given under a paraphrase,
 doth not *comparatively* denote the *only being*,
 or *substance*, but strictly and properly, Him,
which was, and is, and is to come ; and expresses
 the *self-existence* or *essential eternity* of the
 divine nature, as distinguished from *created*
Beings, which have a beginning *a parte antè*,
 and a dependent duration *a parte post*.

As for the speculations of *Plato*, &c. con-
 cerning their false *God*, it is impossible to
 make them square rightly with the inspired

* P. 4.

appellations of the true ; and such authorities being extremely vague and uncertain, will at any rate do the *author's* cause no service ; for it is by no means clear, that *Plato asserts that the word εἰς is solely applicable to the divine nature ;* since he also asserts, that it is applicable to the essence of the human soul^f. And moreover, while *Plato* tells us that οὐκ ὄν (or, as he hath it in the neuter gender, τοὺς ὄν) is the only Being that *exists* ; his scholar *Aristotle* holds, that it is the only Being which is abstracted from existence, or which does *not exist*.

The author next considers God as the *first cause*, and argues thus—" The consciousness " of my own existence necessarily leads to a " *first cause*, which first cause can only be " *one*, because two first causes are a contradiction in terms." And this argument is ushered in with the following caution : " I " hope I cannot be thought so absurd or " so impious, as to imagine that there are " more Gods than *one* ^g." But his hope as to this particular, how confidently soever it may be expressed, is not well grounded : for this

^f Ὡς αὐτῆς (ψυχῆς) εἰς ἢ ὄνεια, ἔχουσα τὴν ἐκείνου
τῆς τοῦ ὄντος. Phæd. § 41.

^g P. 5.

very

very *absurdity* and *impiety* is imputed to those of the *Arian* persuasion, and I could never yet find that they were able to clear themselves. The orthodox believe, that the divine *essence* is *one*, and that a plurality of *persons* are comprehended by it. But the *Arians* assert, that the *substance* of God is only *one person* : yet allow at the same time, (as they must do, or turn *Deists*)¹ that *Jesus Christ* is *God*. Now two different *substances* make two different *Gods* ; and in all this they are so far from maintaining the divine *unity*, that it is hard to say wherein they differ from *Polytheists*. This author hath exceeded them all. He owns very freely (as we shall see hereafter) that the name *Jehovah* is applied to the three persons of the Trinity ; and, therefore, according to the interpretation of that word, which he himself must allow to be of the same sense with *Exod. iii. 14. I AM THAT I AM*, he must hold three *separate self-existent Beings*, which can differ only in name from *three first causes*. To allow that the only name of God which implies *self-existence*, is applied to the *second* and *third* persons of the *Trinity*, and then to argue that they are not *co-eternal* with the *first*, is to save the orthodox the trouble of exposing the doctrine of *Arius*.

This comment expresses the natural and obvious sense of the words; and is such as will occur to every reader whose head is not already pre-engaged with sentiments of another kind. The Socinian interpretation of this text being a very great curiosity, I shall take the liberty of inserting it, with a few remarks. *Before Abraham was, I am.* John viii. 58. The literal construction of the words leads us to this plain and simple truth, that before *Abraham* was born, or did exist, *Jesus Christ*, who speaks the words, had a being, and did exist: consequently, it was no wonder that *Abraham* should have seen him. No,

said

saith Socinus, the meaning is this —“ *πρὸ*
Ἀβραὰμ γενέσθαι, before *Abram* can be *Abra-*
ham, that is, the *father of many nations*,
Ἐγὼ ἔμμι, I, saith Jesus, must be the Saviour
 “ and light of the world.” So that the words
 contain a *monition* and a *commination*. The
 monition is, “ that the Jews would believe
 “ him to be the light and Saviour of the world,
 “ before the Gentiles should be adopted into
 “ the number of *Abraham’s children*, and he
 “ thereby become the *father of many nations*.”
 The *commination* is not indeed expressed, but
 it is implied; viz. “ that if once the Gentiles
 “ should be admitted into favour, the Jews,
 “ for their infidelity, should be disinherited
 “ and disowned for ever.”

This amazing discovery was made by *Leo-*
nius; and if we believe his nephew, *Faustus*
Socinus,—*non sine multis precibus, ipseus Jesu*
nomine invocato, impetravit ipse *. *Erasmus*
Johannes had the effrontery to say of it, *fateor*
me per omnem vitam meam non magis contortam
interpretationem audivisse. *Faustus*, it seems,
 had hoped better things of the said *Erasmus*
Johannes—*sperabam te potius fassurum, nul-*
lam in vitâ tuâ Scripturæ interpretationem te

* Socin. contr. *Entrop.* p. 678.

*audivisse, quæ hæc sic aut acutior, aut verior, quæve magis divinum quid sapiat, et a Deo ipso patefactam fuisse præ se ferat. Hoc profecto affirmare ausim, cum Deus illi viro (Lælio scil.) permulta aliis prorsus tunc temporis incognita patefecerit, vir quidquam inter illa omnia esse, quod hæc interpretatione divinius videri queat. Socin. contra Eras. Johan. p. 505. cited by Dr. Edwards in his Preservative against Socinianism, Part iv. p. 84, where the reader may see an account at large of its manifold and unparalleled absurdities, all blasphemously fathered upon the spirit of truth. The process made use of in educing this marvellous construction is worth observing. First, the word *Abraham* is perverted from a proper name into an *appellative*, so that it doth not denote the *person* of *Abraham*, but the privilege and blessing implied in the *changing* of his name. 2. The word *γενεσις* is altered from denoting the *substantial formation* and *existence* of *Abraham*, into an accidental capacity, or spiritual mutation, whereby he was *made*, not a *man*, like all others at their *birth*, but an allegorical *father of many nations*. 3. The word *ἐμὴ*, by which our Saviour expressed his own *real* and *substantial existence*, is made, in like manner, to denote his *office* of *Messiah*.*

And

And lastly, instead of a plain, direct, affirmative proposition, the words are asserted to contain a *monition* and *commination*, of which not one syllable is either expressed or implied, or was ever imagined to be by any human creature till the days of *Lælius Socinus*; who thinking his own private judgment too slender a foundation for all these wonderful things to rest upon, pretended to receive them by immediate revelation from heaven. The union of *heresy* and *enthusiasm*, which appears upon this occasion, is worthy of admiration; but I must return now to our Author.

Concerning the *first cause*, he affirms, that “ every thing which exists besides that, which “ way soever it is brought into being, whether it be *begotten*, *emanated*, *created*, or “ *spoken forth*, it must proceed from, and “ owe its existence to, the WILL as well as “ power of that first cause.” There is nothing in the Scripture to authorize any such supposition, as this of the Son of God *owing his existence* to the *power* of the *first cause*. For by the application of the name *Jehovah* to him, he is *existence itself*; and the New Testament having taught us, that he is *the Power*, as well as *the Wisdom of God*; then if we admit this author’s principles, we shall have the

absurd doctrine, that the *Power of God* is created by the *Power of God*. However, to make this appear plausible, he adds, in a note, the opinion of *Athanasius*, who (as he tells us) “ acknowledges it to be impious to say that “ God the Father was necessitated to act, “ even when he begat the Son; and allows “ also, that neither the Son nor the Holy “ Spirit are the first cause; but the Father “ alone, and that the Son and Holy Spirit “ were both caused¹.” In all this, he studiously avoids the word *creature*; though he takes care to express the same thing in other words, as the *Arians* always did: for which reason, *Athanasius*, in that very page², to part of which the author refers us, thus appeals to his readers—“ How manifest is their craft “ and equivocation! for while they are “ ashamed to call him (*Christ*) the *work of* “ *God*, or a *creature*, they devise other modes “ of speech, introducing the term *WILL*, and “ saying, that unless he existed by the *will* “ of God, God was necessitated to have a “ Son *against his will*. But (adds he) ye impious men, who pervert every thing for the “ sake of your *heresy*, who pretends to ascribe

¹ *Ibid.*² Vol. I. p. 512.“ *necessity*

“ *necessity to God?*” And this is his method of *acknowledging it to be impious to say, that God the Father was necessitated to act*; which expression, as it stands together with the context, appears in a light extremely different from what it does in the author’s reference to it.

It is true, *Athanasius* does speak of the Father as a cause, but not in the author’s sense of a *first cause*. “ He *begets* the Son “ (saith he) and *sends forth* the Spirit, and “ therefore, we call the Father a *cause*¹,” but still he applies the term only to the *begetting* of the Son, and the *procession* of the Spirit, both of which are the terms of the Scripture. That the relation between any of the persons of the Godhead, is the same as that between the *cause* and the *effect*, or the *work* and the *maker* of it, is what *Athanasius* constantly denies; and to shew that the relation does not subsist in time but in eternity, he uses the *present* tense, and not the *past*, as this writer is pleased to do in translating his words.

¹ Γενῶ μὲν τὸν Υἱόν· ἐκπορεύεται δὲ καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον καὶ διὰ τούτου λέγεται ὁ Πατήρ αἰτία. V. II. p. 443.

In the course of his Essay, he hath screwed up the doctrine of an *attractive power in matter* to such a ridiculous height, that the great *Newton*, who generally expressed himself with much caution and reserve, and left his *attraction* open to a physical solution, and to the test of future experiments, would have owed him small thanks for the puerility of his speculations, as I may be allowed to call it without offence. I will extract, from this part of his theory, such passages as will enable us to form a judgment of it.—“ When we see a
 “ stone descend to the ground—the cause of
 “ that motion must be some *spirit* or other—
 “ since as *nothing can act where it is not*, that
 “ power whereby any body continues in motion, is as much the effect of some *conco-*
 “ *mitant spirit*, as the power which first put
 “ it in motion^m.—The tendency of one body
 “ towards another, is from the attractive
 “ force of some spirit, which attractive power
 “ being in proportion to the quantity of matter, makes the difference of weight or gravity in bodiesⁿ.—Every particle of active
 “ or attractive matter must be directed in its
 “ motions by some *spirit, united to that mat-*

^m P. 9.ⁿ P. 10.“ *ter,*

“*ter*, which may have just such a quantity
“ of *intellect* communicated to it by its crea-
“ tor, as will enable it to perform those func-
“ tions which are assigned it, in order to carry
“ on the general œconomy of the universe °?”

The philosophy of these passages agrees in part with that of some ancient heathens, particularly the *Stoics*: but our author's system differs from theirs in two particulars, which cannot be considered as improvements. 1. They supposed the active *spirit* residing in matter to be only *one*, and called it the *soul of the world*; but he hath divided this one into infinitely many. 2. To this spirit, as to the human soul, they gave a *body*, supposing it to reside in æther, air, or fire. But the spirits of his system do their work without the intervention of any active material fluid; which is as contrary to the sense of antiquity, as to the result of modern experiments, particularly those of electricity.

This intelligent spirit, by which we are to understand the *æther* expanded through the whole solar system, and united to all matter, is the *Athene*, called by *Athenagoras* ἡ φρονησις δια παντων διηκυσσα, a mind or intellect pervading all things: which same *Athene*, or

Minerva, was no other than the active power of the sun's rays, or of the æther diffused every way from his orb, as *Macrobius* delivers it from *Porphyry*, who affirmed, that *Minerva* was the power of the sun, which (besides its wonderful effects upon inanimate bodies) even communicates prudence and intelligence to the human mind^p. The same thing we learn from *Jamblichus*, concerning the *Egyptian* deity, *Neith* or *Neithas*, namely, that it was *Θεομα δεικνόντις δι' ὅλης τῆς κοσμοῦ*, the name of a God who pervades all nature. And *Tatian* accuses the *Greeks* with idolatry, for worshipping—*πνεῦμα δια τῆς ὅλης δεικνόν*, a SPIRIT which pervades matter^q. But as there is such superabundant evidence to prove, that the most ancient heathens assigned the direction of all effects to an *etherial spirit*, endued with intelligence, I must not drop the subject without producing a little more of it. The author of the book *de Dieta* (supposed to be *Hippocrates*, though some think it more ancient) describes this subtile agent under the character of *etherial fire*—"Which silently and imperceptibly governs and disposes all nature. In this is life, sense, prudence, the power

^p *Saturn*, lib. I. chap. 17.

^q *Orat. cont. Græcos*, p. 144. Edit. Par.

“ of increase, motion, diminution, alteration,
 “ sleep, vigilance; and it doth, with an in-
 “ cessant activity, direct all things, both in
 “ the earth, and in the airy regions’.” The
 ancient philosophers, according to *Cicero*,
 “ divided nature into two parts, one of which
 “ was active, the other passive.” These they
 subdivided into the four elements; of which,
air and *fire* have the power of *moving* and of
 actuating, while the others, *earth* and *water*,
 are passive, and disposed to receive their im-
 pressions*. With all this, the *igneus vigor**,
 or *spiritus intus alens**, of *Virgil*, and the in-
 tellectual *spirit* of our author, (though, indeed,
 he does not seem to understand it) perfectly
 agree.

And here, if by the way I may be permitted
 to give my opinion, I cannot but think that
 the heathen sages, bating their atheistical
 compliment of *intelligence*, talk very ration-
 ally of this powerful agent the *æther*; which,

* Πνεϋσς οτις παντων επικρατειται, διαπον απαλὰ καὶ οὐ φουσ, αἰφροον καὶ οψει καὶ ψαυσει· ἐν τῷ ψυχῇ, ἰοϋ, φροησις, αυξησις, κινησις, μειωσις, διαλλαξις, νητος, ογρη γορησις· τῷ παντα δια παντι κινειναι, καὶ τα δε καὶ κινωα, εδικοις αἰρημιζον.
 Lib. i. Sect. 11.

* Acad. Quest. lib. i. chap. 6.

* *Æneid* VI. 730.

* *Ibid.* l. 726.

if

if considered as an inferior or *second* cause, under the direction of the *supreme*, and pursued in this sense, would certainly open a most entertaining scene of natural philosophy*.

We find this *Spirit*, and its operations, traced in brief by the author through the whole creation, under the name of *instinct*. "It is by *instinct* (says this philosopher) that "the minutest particles of matter attract or "repel each other: it is by *instinct* that the "flower of the field is directed in throwing "forth its leaves and its flowers, and forming "its fruit in due season: it is by *instinct* "that the birds of the air build their nests; "and the beasts of the field provide for themselves and their young". All this is no better than an abuse of words: for *instinct* denotes that faculty in *animals* by which they differ from *plants*, and all other *inanimate* matter. It is true, the distinction in some species of each is almost imperceptible; and so it is in some cases between *instinct* and *reason*, which yet are essentially different.

* This hath been attempted since the former edition of the *Answer to an Essay on Spirit*, in an *Essay on the first Principles of Natural Philosophy*, printed for Robinson and Roberts; where the Reader may see, if he pleases, what hath been said upon this subject.

The operations and effects of this *instinct* will help us to discover what sort of *agent* is here disguised under a term never before applied to it. He observes, that it is the same instinct, which enables the beasts, &c. to provide for themselves, and the flower to throw forth its leaves, and form its fruit: therefore this *instinct* is what the heathens called the *soul of the world*, and I find it commented upon nearly in the same words—*Hæc igitur est ANIMÆ MUNDI natura et dignitas—quæ cælo ignes accendit, aera ac mare luce æstuque replet atque attollit, terras ANIMALIBUS PLANTISQUE fœcundat, tellurem denique æternâ in ævum vice nunc pruinis, nunc FLORIBUS VESTIT*². Or if we have a mind to take it from *Macrobius*, it will be still more express—*FLORUM species hic DEUS (SOL SC.) inseminat, progenerat, fovet, nutrit, maturatque*². In like manner according to the true and proper sense of this affair, we read, in the Holy Scripture, of the *precious things put forth by the Moon*^b, and of the *tender grass*, which springeth up from the earth, *by clea^r shining after rain*^c. So that the *author's* account of *instinct*, brings us back again to

² *Vallin. in Boët. lib. iii. p. 144.*

^a *Sat. l. i. c. 17.*

^b *Dent. xxxiii. 14.*

^c *2 Sam. xxiii. 4.*

the *Athene* of *Jamblichus*, and the *virtus solis* of *Porphyry*.

He, moreover, proceeds so far as to think, that “*all created spirits* may owe the limits of
 “ their existence, and the extent of their fa-
 “ culties, to *matter*; and that the same spi-
 “ rit, which, when cloathed with one set of
 “ material organs, is only capable of exerting
 “ its intelligence in the performing of attrac-
 “ tion and repulsion, and when jarring ele-
 “ ments meet, &c. breaks forth in thunder,
 “ lightning, and earthquakes (*cælo IGNES ac-
 “ cendit*) may, when united to a different set
 “ of a more delicate contexture, be enabled
 “ to *think* and *reason*, and when agitated with
 “ anger, to break forth in quarrels, conten-
 “ tion, and war^d.” So that the soul of a
passionate man, and the soul of *gunpowder*, are
 in nature the same; only the one is *cloathed*
 with charcoal and sulphur, the other with
 flesh and blood; and the same soul that ope-
 rates in a whirlwind, and tears up trees, may
 afterwards operate in a tyrant, and tear up
 kingdoms.

But there is another very shocking conse-
 quence which will naturally flow from this
 principle; for if the same spirit which per-

^d P. 24, 25.

forms only the offices of attraction and repulsion in inanimate bodies, may, when united to a different set of organs, be capable of thought and reasoning; then, *vice versâ*, the same spirit, which, when united to the body of a man, is capable of *thought* and *reason*, may, when that set of organs is dissolved, be united to an inanimate body, and be capable of *exerting its intelligence*, only in the performance of *attraction* and *repulsion*; which destroys the true immortality of the soul, introducing us, at the same time, to the doctrine of *transmigration*, and to all the jargon of the *Egyptians* about the *revolution of the forms*. But God forbid that any man, who professes himself a *Christian*, should be *spoiled himself*, and endeavour to *spoil* others, with such *philosophy* and *vain deceit* as this!

How irreligious and unphilosophical is it to talk of *intellect* * in *thunder* and *lightning*! when all these natural operations are performed by the mechanical agency of the air, or *æther*, under the direction of God; for so

* *Cornelius Agrippa*, in his *occult Philosophy*, mentions *nine* orders of *Devils*; the sixth of which was called the *powers of the air*; these are very busy in *thunder* and *lightning*, and their prince is called *Mirizim*. See *Le Grand's Body of Phil.* p. 89. fol.

we find them represented in holy writ—קול נתנו שחקים *Ætheres dederunt vocem*, as *Pagninus* renders it; or, as the *English* version hath it—*The AIR thundered, and THINE arrows* (the shafts of lightning directed by the hand of the Almighty) *went abroad*^f. There is, in this place, no mention of any *spiritual* agency, but that of the *supreme Being*; nor of any secondary efficient, but the elements of the heaven, which are not intelligent but mechanical causes, with vapours, clouds, and other proper materials to work upon.

So likewise as to the affair of vegetation; a plant we perceive will not grow without the agency of *air* and *heat*: whereas, if this operation was performed by the active power of any *spirit* residing in the plant, then it should continue to extract its nutriment from the earth, and to flourish without the external agency of any mechanical instrument; which is utterly contradicted by experience.

But, to be no longer serious upon such a very odd subject, let us allow, that there are *spirits* or *intelligences* residing in all bodies, wherein we discern any active or attractive power; and that we may hear how this phi-

^f *Psal.* lxxvii. 17.

losophy will sound, I shall attempt to account for, in the author's stile, the wonderful effects of the *loadstone*. In the *loadstone*, then, there are two poles, one of which *attracts*, the other *repels*; and since a spirit which hath the operation of attraction assigned to it, *always attracts as a necessary agent*^a, and that which hath the operation of *repulsion* assigned to it, *always repels*^b, there must in a loadstone be *two spirits*, sitting back to back upon the two poles, one performing its office of attraction, and pulling the needle towards it, the other that of repulsion, and driving it off. When the poles are inverted, or the attracting one changed (as it may be) into the repelling and *vice versa*, the two spirits have agreed to change places; and when by *fire*, or the stroke of an hammer, either a loadstone, or magnetic piece of iron, loses its attracting and repelling power, the spirits are both of them driven out, and must endeavour to amuse themselves in some other branch of philosophy.

He hath likewise philosophised much on the operations, and on the essence of the human soul; but in his reasonings upon the former, he seems greatly to have mistaken the meaning both of *Plato* and *St. Paul*. For,

^a P. II.

^b *Ibid.*

having observed, that the human mind is forced to be at the trouble of “comparing” the propositions, which result from the “agreement or disagreement of our ideas, in order to arrive at truth: hence it is, (says he) that *Plato*¹, speaking of human abilities in the investigation of truth, calls it “*beholding things in the glass of reason*; which he explains by saying, that as those who contemplate an eclipse of the sun, *lose the sight of it*, unless they are so careful as to view its reflection in water; so the eye of an human spirit is too weak to find out truth, unless it looks at it through the medium of reason; which *St. Paul* also calls^k, “*seeing through a glass darkly*”¹.

Plato does not here discourse about *comparing propositions*, that is, about (λογισμῶν) *reasoning*; but (λογοί) the *reasons* of terrestrial things, or things which *are not*; and informs us, that by attending properly to them, we may thence infer the *reasons* of the (ταυτῶν) *things which really ARE*; as for example, by observing nature, it appears that no quality can possibly admit its contrary. *Fire*, the essence of which is *heat*, cannot be-

¹ In *Phaed.*^k 1 Cor. xiii. 12.¹ *Essay*, p. 20, 21.

come *cold*, and yet continue to be *fire*; therefore, the soul, the essence of which is *life*, cannot possibly admit its contrary, *death*.

As to the similitude which *Socrates* makes use of, to illustrate this his plan of enquiry, the author hath deviated as much from the sense of the *Greek*, as if he had followed implicitly some *Latin* or *French* translation. For, says he, “ they who contemplate an “ eclipse of the sun, *lose sight of it*, unless “ they are so careful as to view its reflection “ in water;” whereas *Plato* has it thus—— “ unless they view the image of the sun in “ water, or some such thing, they *lose* (not “ the *sight of the sun*, but) their *own eye-* “ *sight*,” by gazing attentively upon an object brighter than it can bear^m. That is, the mind, by contemplating too closely the *τα οὐρα*, and endeavouring, by its own internal energy, to behold them as they are in themselves, will be dazzled and stupified; but by having recourse to sensible objects, and reasoning from an analogy in nature, it may contemplate the images of them without being impaired. This is one of the finest speculations in the philosophy of *Plato*: but

^m Διαφθεύονται γὰρ καὶ οἱ τοὺς οὐρανοὺς, εἰ μὴ ἐν ὕδατι ἢ ἐν τινὶ τοιούτῳ σκοπεύται τῆς εἰκόνα αὐτῶν. Phæd. § 48.

no man can make much of it, as it stands represented in an *Essay on Spirit*.

Let us next examine whether St. Paul, when he speaks of *seeing through a glass darkly*, hath any view to the *comparing of propositions*. The Greek is, βλέπωμεν γὰρ ἀρτί δι' ἐσπέρας ἐν αἰνιγματί, τότε δὲ πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον. *Now (in this life) we see through a glass (or mirror) by an ænigma; but then face to face.* Wherein he alludes to the manner in which we are obliged to attain to all our knowledge of things spiritual or invisible, that is, by using the creation as a mirror in which to behold them: *for, as he observes in another place, the invisible things of God are clearly seen from the creation of the world, being understood by the things which are made.* The whole *natural world*, throughout the sacred oracles, is referred to as a figure of the *spiritual*; instances of which it would be endless to produce: but as my meaning may not be sufficiently clear and explicit without a few, it may readily be remembered, that the *power and glory of Christ* is set forth in the operations of the visible *light or sun**—his efficacy in *raising the dead*, by the *dew* which

* Mal. iv. 2. John viii. 12.

causes the grass to spring forth from the earth^o—the difference between a corruptible and incorruptible body, by earthly substances, and the lights of the firmament^p—the efficacy of the *Holy Spirit* in cleansing and purifying the *soul*, by *water* which cleanseth the *body*^q—the hidden manna, or invisible *bread of life*, by natural bread, which supports the body, &c. &c. Here are *visibles* substituted all the way instead of *invisibles*; because as all our ideas enter by the senses, it is impossible for us to form any notion of the latter, but by viewing them through the medium of the former.

To represent things spiritual under the figures of things corporeal, is (according to the Scripture usage of the word) to speak by an *ænigma*; and to attend properly to this method of conveying knowledge, is to *understand a proverb and the interpretation of it, the words of the wise and their (αἰνύματα) riddles or divine allegories*; wherein one thing obvious to sense is expressed, and another, beyond the reach of sense, intended and understood.

^o Is. xxvi. 19.

^p 1 Cor. xv. 38. & seq.

^q John vii. 38, 39. 1 Cor. vi. 11. Tit. iii. 5.

The whole meaning, therefore, of St. *Paul's* expression, as I humbly conceive, is this—all spiritual truths are situated as it were above or *behind* us, out of our sight; while the *glass* of the creation lies *before* us, and therein we see them by a faint reflection: but in another life, when the soul shall be perfected, and the body glorified, we shall then see them no longer by reflection, but *face to face*; that is, we shall then receive not the reflected, but the *direct* rays which issue forth from them.

But we are now going to consider some operations of the soul, infinitely more gross than those of *thinking* and *reasoning*: for, in the author's opinion, "it is the same wise "agent which operates in the *digestion of our* "food, and that enables us to put in execution the directions of our will". It is not my province to explain the whole process of *digestion*, &c. nor would the compass of this work admit of the attempt: but, I think, the *Chymists* are pretty generally agreed, that though many things contribute to digestion, as the mechanical *trituration* of the aliments in the stomach, the injection of the *bile*, and other *menstruums*, yet the principal agent is

fire or *heat**; and Dr. Keil, in his excellent little compendium of *anatomy*, accounts for this operation by the rarefaction of the air; which amounts to the very same thing: his words are these—" This force (that is, of the
 " fluids acting in the stomach) is much augmented by the *impetus* which the *heat* of
 " the stomach gives to the particles of the
 " fluids; nor does this *heat* promote *digestion*
 " only thus, but likewise by rarefying the *air*
 " contained in the pores of our food, which
 " bursts its parts asunder†." *Air* and *fire* are *material* and mechanical agents: whether they are *wise* ones or not, I leave my christian readers to consider carefully before they turn Heathens: for this was undoubtedly the opinion of the ancient heathen philosophers, whose opinions are collected by *Manasseh Ben Israel*—" *Hipparchus* thought that the soul
 " was composed of *fire*; *Anaximenes*, *Anaxagoras*, *Diogenes*, *Cynicus*, and *Critias* maintained, that it was *air*. Others again contended, that it was a mixture of *air* and
 " *fire*, as *Epicurus*. Others affirmed, that it
 " was a *thin spirit* diffused through the whole
 " body, as *Hippocrates* *Cous*. *Heraclitus*

* See Dr. *Freind*'s Chym. Lect. p. 103.

† *Anat. abridged*, p. 41.

“ *Ponticus* said that the soul is *light*.” With some, or with all of these, the author must concur in sentiment, when he refers the operations of the material or *animal spirit* to the essence of the immortal and immaterial, which is altogether distinct from it.

The *Chevalier Ramsay* is pleased to say, that the *Pythagoreans* “ always distinguished “ between the *understanding* or the *pure spirit*, and the *animal soul* or *etherial body* : “ that they considered the one as the source “ of our *thoughts*, the other as the *cause* of “ *our motions*.” But I could wish that this learned man had been a little more express in his evidence for the truth of this distinction. It is, to be sure, highly rational to suppose, that there is an *animal soul*, or etherial fluid, diffused through the body ; and this agent bids the fairest for supplying us with an easy and natural solution of *muscular motion*² : but after

¹ *De Resur. Mort.* lib. i. chap. 8.—the same collection, with several additions to the same purpose, is to be met with in *Macrobius in Somn. Scip.* lib. i. chap. 14.

² *Theol. of the ancients*, p. 40, 41.

³ Sir *Isaac Newton* was plainly of this opinion, and has a remarkable passage to our purpose—*Adjicere jam liceret nonnulla de spiritu quodam subtilissimo, cujus vi & actioni. bus—sensatio omnis excitatur, & membra animalium ad volun.*

after what manner the *will* or *intellectual spirit* makes its impressions upon this, so as to cause it to exert its influence, must always remain a secret.

When the *Essay-writer* imputes these mechanical operations of the *material spirit*, to what he calls a *wise agent*, he seeks to confirm his *hypothesis* by this vulgar observation, that “when the belly is full, the bones would be at rest; which (says he) seems entirely owing to this, that the spirit being unmolested with human cogitations, and its attendance upon our will, may be more at leisure to pursue those operations, which are immediately necessary towards our preservation.” He doth not impute this to any gross fumes which arise from the stomach, and oppress the *sensory*; no: the *spirit* is so much taken up with its natural functions of *digestion*, *concoction*, *separation*, &c. that it is too busy to think or reason. He might have added, as a collateral proof, that when a man takes physic, and the soul is exercising its *purgative faculty*, he is then less able to

voluntatem moventur, vibrationibus scilicet hujus spiritus ad cerebrum & a cerebro in musculos propagatis. Princip. Schol. gen. ad fin.

⁊ Ibid.

study,

study, read, or meditate: which may be easily accounted for upon his principles; though physicians impute this indisposition to a relaxation of the whole frame, which forbids any intense application of the bodily organs. I am willing to believe that the author did not mean it as such; but certainly this notion of the rational soul, is a branch of *materialism*, and agrees with the religion and philosophy of *Vanini* and *Spinoza*.

As I have now finished my first chapter, I think it necessary to observe, that this head of the *Essay* we have hitherto been upon, is entitled by the author, *The Doctrine of the Trinity considered in the Light of Nature and Reason*, because, unless the reader were reminded of it, he might not so readily perceive any connection between that sacred doctrine, and these philosophical speculations.

CHAP II.

The Existence and Power of created Spirits.

* I. THERE seems to be no contradiction “ (says the author) in supposing “ that God might communicate so much power “ to one of his own *creatures*, of a more ex- “ alted nature than man, as to enable him to “ *create* inferior beings, and frame a world of “ his own *.” This is introduced, I presume, in order to prepare us for conceiving, that *Christ* may be a *Creator*, and yet notwithstanding this, be himself a *creature*; which, in effect, was the heresy of *Carpocrates*, who affirmed that angels were the creators of the world *. But by a *Creator*, the *Christian* world hath always understood a *first cause*: and if there are more *Creators* than one, there are more *first causes* than one. So that the *author* hath hereby entangled himself in a contradiction, which, a while ago, he seemed to hold in the very utmost contempt. And

* P. 271.

* Ο δὲ Καρποκρατὴς Ἀγγέλους τοὺς κόσμους δημιουργοὺς εἶναι φησι.
Athanas. Orat. II. contr. Arian.

farther,

farther, if God may give this power to one creature, because *there is no contradiction in it* (which, by the way, is such a turn of arguing, as will run us upon everlasting suppositions) then he may, for the same reason, communicate this power to any or to all of those spirits he hath given being to.

II. He goes on—"We cannot say, but
 " that some spirits may be furnished with
 " bodies of so delicate a texture, that they
 " may cloathe themselves with light, as it
 " were with a garment, may make the clouds
 " their chariot, and walk upon the wings of
 " the wind^b." We have no right to infer any such thing from a description, meant only of the supreme God: for to Him it is, that *the Psalmist*, in the preceding verse, addresses himself—*Bless the Lord* (את יהוה) *O my Soul: O LORD my GOD, thou art become exceeding glorious, &c.* As the supreme God is most indisputably here denominated by the word *Jehovah*, it argues a great degree of presumption in the author to rob him of the context, and apply it to *created spirits*, without being able, or even attempting, to produce any reason or authority for so doing.

^b P. 28.

III. And

III. And again—"That no worlds, filled
 " with intelligent spirits, were created till
 " about 6000 years ago; about which time,
 " both *reason* and *revelation* agree, that this
 " ball of earth began to *revolve* about the
 " sun, is a thought unworthy of a philoso-
 " pher." *Reason*, to be sure, hath many
 proofs, that the world was created just about
 6000 years ago; the first and most striking
 of which is, that it cannot prove it to have
 been created at all. For *Aristotle* maintained
 that it was *eternal*⁴; and even though he had
 received some obscure account of the world's
 creation by tradition, absolutely rejected it as
 absurd and incredible: and *Aristotle* is, I
 think, allowed to have been a perfect master
 of *reason*. But how doth *revelation* agree,
 that this ball of earth began to *revolve* about
 the sun? If the author can shew where the
 Scripture intimates the revolution of the earth,
 he hath an opportunity of clearing up a diffi-
 culty, as some think it, in the sacred philo-
 sophy.

IV. After he has supposed, that a *creature*
 may be a *Creator*, purely because it is *no con-*
tradiction, he passes on to that rule or domi-

^c P. 30. ⁴ *Gal's Court of the Gent.* P. II. B. 6. ch. 1.

nion over the earth, and the several nations of it, with which he imagines the angels to be invested. He begins with borrowing a doctrine from the heathen poets, and then attempts to reconcile the Scripture with it. The *Pagan* notion of this matter, as delivered by the *Essay-writer*, is as follows:—" *Hesiod*,
 " one of the first *heathen* authors extant, sup-
 " poseth myriads of invisible spirits, cloathed
 " in air, attending upon this terrestrial globe,
 " and employed as *angels*, that is, *messengers*,
 " between the great God and mankind, ob-
 " serving their actions, and reporting them
 " to *Jupiter*." And *Plato* says^e; " that
 " *Saturn* well knowing there was no man
 " who could have absolute empire over
 " others, without abandoning himself to all
 " kinds of violence and injustice, subjected
 " the nations to *dæmons* or *intelligent spirits*,
 " as their lords and governors ^f."

His accounts for the most part being lame and imperfect, it will be proper to examine more particularly into the nature of these *dæmons*: this done, it will be very clear, that there neither is, nor can be, any resemblance or similitude between them, and the *minis-*

^e *Plato* de Leg. lib. 4.

^f P. 32.

tering spirits of the true God, mentioned in Holy Scripture.

Hesiod tells us, that “ the race of men
“ which lived in peace and security in the
“ golden age under the reign of *Saturn*,
“ were, when they died (upon the expiration
“ of that happy age) ordained by the wise
“ counsel of *Jupiter* to be dæmons, which go
“ to and fro about the earth, clothed in air,
“ observing the good and evil actions of
“ men *.” The dæmons, therefore, or *myriads*
of invisible spirits, which *Hesiod* supposeth,
are nothing more than the departed souls of
men ; as for their being *angels* or *messengers*
between the great god (that is, the heathen
Jupiter) and mankind, he says nothing about
it.

There happens to be a very notable contradiction, as to this affair, between *Plato* and *Hesiod*: the one supposing these dæmons to have been appointed by *Saturn*, that is, during the time of the *golden age* ; because his administration and the *golden age* expired together: the other maintaining, that they were ordained by *Jupiter* ; who, as it is well known, did not begin his reign till he had dethroned his father *Saturn*.

* *Hesiod. Epy. lib. i. l. 108, &c.*

Another

Another account of these beings, given more at large, is to be found in *Apuleius*, which I shall contract into as small a compass as can conveniently be done, and set it down.

“ There are certain middle powers (between
 “ the *gods* and *men*) which are divine: these
 “ the *Greeks* call *dæmons*, by whom, as *Plato*
 “ supposes, all the miracles of magicians are
 “ performed, and the various signs, such as
 “ appear in the entrails of beasts, the flash-
 “ ings of lightning, &c. by which we foretel
 “ future events, are regulated; for it is not
 “ worth the while of the *Dii superi* to conde-
 “ scend to such offices as these. They have
 “ bodies so exactly balanced, that they are
 “ neither too light nor too heavy; for were
 “ they too light, they might mount upwards,
 “ and fly off into the more remote ethereal
 “ spaces: were they too heavy, they might
 “ then be precipitated into the infernal re-
 “ gions.” The argument made use of by
Apuleius to prove the existence of these airy
dæmons, is something curious: “ For as there
 “ are animals which inhabit the *earth*, others
 “ which live in *water*, and others again, as
 “ *Aristotle* contends, in *fire*; therefore, ar-
 “ gues he, it is absurd to suppose, that the
 “ element of *air* is left desolate, and without
 “ its

“ its proper inhabitants generated in it : as
 “ for birds, they are more properly to be
 “ esteemed terrestrial animals ^a. ”

Such is the nature of dæmons, as described by the heathens, who believed in, and worshipped this tribe, only because they thought the matter of the universe to be eternal, and the *air* (of which, according to them, the human soul was a part) divine and intelligent. Whether there is any resemblance between these and the *ministring spirits* mentioned in the *Holy Scripture*, will appear when we consider, that the former depend upon the matter of this system for their existence, and have their residence in the lower region of the air : the latter were in being before it, and dwell in the presence of ¹ God. We should likewise remember the promise of *Christ*, that at the *resurrection* we shall be as the *angels of God which are in heaven* ; and if by *heaven* is meant the *material heaven*, or expanse filled with spirits, then our residence is to be as theirs is, in the *air*, which is every way impossible. For at the last day, *the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt*

^a *Apul. de Deo Socratis*, p. 62, &c.

¹ *Rev. xii. 7. Dan. vii. 10.*

with fervent heat ; the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up^k.

V. But we ought to enquire, how the *heathens* can be qualified to give any evidence worth our notice upon this article ? The opinion of the *Essay-writer* is, that “ the *Greeks*,
 “ it is certain, and *Plato* in particular, borrowed many of their theological sentiments
 “ from the *Hebrews* ; among whom this, of
 “ a number of invisible spirits attending upon
 “ this globe of earth, and presiding over
 “ states and kingdoms, was certainly one^l.”
 The infinite disparity between the two accounts of these spirits, as given, on the one hand, by the heathen philosophers, and, on the other, by the Scripture, should, I think, seem entirely to preclude any such supposition. But what *Hebrews* does the author here mean ? not the modern *Jews*, for they borrowed from the *Greeks*, and corrupted their own theology by heathen philosophy. If he means the *ancient Hebrews*, they must have been so very ancient, that none of their sentiments are to be found but in the early parts of the Scripture-history. For the *Greeks* received most of their knowledge, and indeed all their an-

^k 2 *Pet.* iii. 10.

^l P. 33.

cient theology, from the *Phœnicians*; being descended from those *Canaanites* which in the time of *Joshua* inhabited *Asia*, who afterwards were called *Phœnicians*, and spread themselves from *Asia* into *Africa*, and from thence into *Greece*, *Italy*, &c.

Hence came that knowledge which the *Greeks* had of writing, or *letters*, from *Cadmus*, as they say, but rather from $\Theta\Delta\mu$, CaDoM, the *East*^a, the land of *Canaan*, from whence the *Israelites* had driven them. And this indeed they clearly confess, by calling this *Cadmus* a *Phœnician*, and their letters $\Phi\alpha\iota\iota\kappa\eta\tau\iota\alpha$, the *Phœnician things*^a, as being absolutely of *Phœnician* or oriental origin.

All their theological sentiments of this early date, were certainly derived from the *Canaanites*; and the very highest of them must founder in that idolatry, by adhering to which, the inhabitants of the land of *Canaan* had filled up the measure of their iniquities, and were exterminated by the armies of the living God.

As for any sentiments of *Phœnician* theology, borrowed and picked up by *Plato* in his

^a See *Miscel. Reflexions* upon Mr. *Squire's* Essays.

^a *Chibul's* Antiq. Asiat. p. 99. No. 37, 38.

travels, he himself is not very clear concerning them. He calls them *Phœnician* and *Syrian fables*, and declares that they were *ἀνε-
πτοί*, *unspeakable*, that is, (as the learned *Gale* very judiciously comments) *because he neither understood, nor could express the mind thereof*. Now these must have been either portions of the pure Scripture, or *Jewish* comments upon the Scripture—if they were the former, the original of them must be found in the *Bible*; if they were the latter, they were legendary; because ever from the *Babylonish* captivity, to the coming of *Christ*, they grew daily more and more ignorant, in proportion as oral tradition prevailed, and the plain word of Scripture was thereby corrupted. In either case *Plato* confesses that he did not understand them, and therefore not much can be gathered from them. As to the affair of *demons*, or *intelligent spirits*, in particular, *Plato* expresses himself so clearly upon this, and withal so differently from the Scripture, that we may fairly conclude, that this sentiment was *certainly not borrowed* from thence.

However, upon the whole I will confess, (and it must be confessed) that many articles

in the theology of the Pagans were originally of *Hebrew*, that is, of *divine* extraction; but then they are so mangled, so metamorphosed to the purposes of heathenism, and turned into the channel of idolatry, that to think of truly explaining any mysterious doctrine of the Scriptures by these ethnic perversions of it, would be no less absurd, than to search for the true sense of *Virgil* in Mr. *Cotton's Travestie*.

VI. We now pass on to the Scripture itself; from whence the author hath extracted several passages, in proof of this his doctrine, of a “number of invisible spirits attending upon this globe of earth, and presiding over states and kingdoms:” whether these proofs have any relation to the point in hand, will appear upon an examination of them.

1. The first is, the text of *Deut.* xxxii. 8. as rendered by the LXX—*When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the nations according to the number of the angels of God*^p. The words which the LXX have most unaccountably translated by *αγγελοι θεου*, *angels of God*, are

^p P. 33, 34, 35.

in the *Hebrew* original, בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל, *children of Israel*, with which our author is so fair as to acknowledge, that the rendering of the LXX does not *exactly agree*. I need not therefore descend to any critical examination of this matter, till he can shew us either that בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל is equivalent to ἀγγελος θεος, or that the authority of the LXX is superior to that of the *Hebrew* text.

2. The second is the following passage from the Wisdom of the Son of Sirach—*For in the division of the nations of the whole earth, God set a ruler (or governing angel, says the author) over every people; but Israel is the Lord's portion*¹. In the first place, this is an apocryphal book of Scripture, which the church doth not apply to establish any doctrine²; and in the second place, the original word, which he renders by, *governing angel*, is nothing more than ηγεμενός, a leader, or head of a nation³; and yet, two pages after

¹ Essay, p. 34. Eccclus, xvii, 17. ² See Art, VI,

³ Ηγεμενός is used Gen. xxxvi. near 50 times by the LXX in this sense. And in this very book of Ecclesiasticus, the word ηγεμενός signifies a master, or ruler—not an angelic one, because certain moral directions are given him for his behaviour, ch. xxxii. 1. or, as some copies have it, ch. xxxv, the title of which is—αὐτοῦ ηγεμενός,

this,

this, he boldly refers to this metaphrase, as if it were a true and undisputed construction.

3. “ What adds no small weight with him
“ in this affair, is an expression made use of
“ by St. *Paul*, *Heb.* ii. 5. where, speaking of
“ the second coming of our Saviour, in a
“ state manifestly superior to angels¹, he says,
“ *for unto the angels hath he not put in sub-*
“ *jection the world to come, of which we speak.*
“ Whence it seems to appear, that it was St.
“ *Paul*’s opinion, that this present world had
“ been put in subjection to angels.” This
is an implication of too great importance to
be admitted, unless other plain and direct
passages of Scripture shall appear to coincide
with it.

4. “ This opinion is confirmed by St. *Jude*.
“ —for, says he, *Ἀγγέλους τε τὰς μὴ τηρησάντας*
“ *τὴν αὐτῶν ἀρχὴν, ἀλλὰ ἀπολιπόντας τὸ ἰδίον*
“ *οἰκητήριον, &c.* *The angels which kept not*
“ *their principalities with due care, but ne-*
“ *glected their proper provinces, he (God)*

¹ How comes the author to confess, that the state of *Christ* is manifestly superior to angels? for we know of no intellectual beings, but *God*, *angels*, and *men*; and as angels are superior to men, and *Christ* superior to both, he must, according to this concession, be *God*.

“ P. 36.

K 4

“ hath

“ hath reserved in everlasting chains under “ darkness.” Such is the author’s translation, and he asserts, that the “ *verse ought to “ be so translated*.” But a more erroneous translation was never offered by any man of learning in the world. 1. He is pleased to render *αρχαι*, *principalities*, and *οικητηριον*, *provinces*, in the plural, when the original words are both singular ; which makes an essential difference. 2. The word *αρχη* cannot relate to any principality which the fallen angels once had over the earth, and forfeited by a neglect of their duty ; because, after their fall, they still preserve their title of *αρχαι*—for, saith St. Paul, *we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, αρχαι**. 3. The words *ιδιον οικητηριον*, cannot signify, *their proper province*, that is, a nation over which an angel had the government, because *οικητηριον* never signifies any thing but an *habitation* or *dwelling-place* ; and to render it as the author does, is as unscholar-like a piece of criticism, as if he had asserted, that when Strabo calls *Athens* the *σοφων οικητηριον*, he means, that it was the place in which *wise men were governing angels*. 4. The dwelling

* P. 37.

* Eph. vi, 12.

of those angels which St. Jude speaks of, could not have been any nations or provinces upon earth, because the angels which fell, fell from heaven—*How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning*! 5. When they were cast down from this their first estate and dwelling, the earth was not created; for the fall of the angels was a circumstance which must have happened before the world; because as soon as the world was created, there was a fallen spirit ready to tempt and destroy mankind.

So that upon the whole, if he had maintained the very contrary, and asserted, not that angels were degraded from the direction of any provinces upon earth, but that they assumed their proper provinces in consequence of their degradation, he would have been much nearer the truth: for those evil spirits, with whom we are in a state of warfare, are called *πορνευσαυτοις, rulers of this world*²; and the devil himself is called the *prince of this world*. He is also termed the *prince of the power of the air*; and those evil spirits, the ministers of his subtle and destructive wiles, which hover in that element, like hungry and sharp-sighted birds of prey, are the *Dæmons* the author endeavours

¹ Isaiah xiv. 12.

² Eph. vi. 12.

to obtrude upon us from the heathens, as beneficent ministers of the Almighty.

5. “ The prophet *Daniel* declares, that
 “ the angel *Gabriel* having touched him, and
 “ spoken to him, said, that he was *come to*
 “ *make him understand what should befall his*
 “ *people in the latter days* ; and that he would
 “ have come sooner, but that *the prince* (or
 “ *ruling, or governing angel*) *of the kingdom*
 “ *of Persia, withstood him one and twenty days,*
 “ *till Michael, one of the chief princes, or as*
 “ the *Hebrew* expresseth it, the FIRST PRINCE,
 “ *came to help him* *.” The Scripture having
 taught us, that it is possible for men to *with-*
stand God, and for the spirit of God to *strive*
with men, it follows, that man may as easily
 resist the ministration of angels ; whence it is
 unwarrantable to suppose, that the prophet
Daniel, when he speaks of the princes of *Persia*
 and *Græcia*, means (according to the *author’s*
 metaphrase) *governing angels*. It is
 plain, he frequently refers to the then condi-
 tion of those kingdoms, and prophecies con-
 cerning the changes of the *Persian* and *Græ-*
cian empires ; wherein, amongst the affairs of
 other *princes*, he alludes to those of *Alexander*

* *Essay*, p. 45. *Dan.* x. 13.

and *Darius Codomannus*^b; so that if the prophecy of *Daniel* be interpreted throughout according to this new plan, the battle of *Arbela* will appear to have been no other than the battle of the angels; we may, therefore, fairly give up all that he hath advanced upon the prophecy of *Daniel*; but before we dismiss it, it will be proper to obviate what he has offered concerning *Michael*, *one of the chief princes*, or the *first prince*: by which, and by another expression in the same prophecy—*MICHAEL, the great prince, which standeth for the children of Israel*—he thinks it is intimated, that as inferior angels were appointed to rule over other nations, so he was commissioned by God to rule over *Israel*^c.

He supposes all along that *Michael* is the same person with *Christ*; and the contrary is not made an article of faith.

There is no evidence throughout the whole Scripture for a plurality of archangels: we hear only of one, who is *αρχων των αγγελων*, (for such the word is when given at length) *the head, or ruler of the angels*, he whom the angels were commanded to worship, as being

^a See *Maubius Hist. Quat. Monarch.* p. 118, &c. p. 302, &c.

^c P. 47.

his creatures and servants. And these angels, which in the book of *Revelation* are called the *angels* of *Michael*, are likewise said to be the angels of *Christ*; for *the Son of Man* (as he himself hath assured us) *shall come, in the glory of the Father, with HIS holy angels*^d; and again, *the Son of Man shall send forth, at the end of the world, HIS angels*^e. Therefore, as the angels have but *one ruler*, and are said to be the angels of *Michael*, and of the *Son of Man*, it seems to follow, that *Michael* and the *Son of Man* are one and the same person. The same inference will offer itself upon a comparison of the two following texts.—*The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, &c.*^f. which voice of the *archangel* is elsewhere said to be *the voice of the Son of Man*—*For the hour is coming, in the which, all they that are in the graves shall hear HIS voice, and come forth*^g.

And thus is this matter rightly understood by the very learned and pious *John Gregory*, where, speaking of that voice which shall awake the dead, he says, “nor shall it be the

^d Matt. xvi. 27.

^e *Ibid.* xiii. 41.

^f 1 Thess. iv. 16.

^g John v. 25, 27, 28.

“ voice

“ voice of a God, and not of a man ; it shall
 “ be an human voice, for by the *archangel*
 “ we are to mean the *Son of Man*, for the
 “ hour is coming, &c¹.”

The only passage wherein *Michael* is mentioned under the character of the *archangel*, is to be found in the epistle of St. *Jude*, v. 9. — *Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not (or was not bold to) bring against him a railing accusation, but said, the Lord rebuke thee.* Now if we turn to the prophecy of *Zachariah*¹, it will appear, that he who spake these words to the devil, as referred to by St. *Jude*, is there expressly characterised as a person of *Jehovah*. And he skewed me, says the prophet, *Joshua standing before the ANGEL OF THE LORD*, and *Satan standing at his right hand to resist him*, and the Lord said unto *Satan*, ‘the Lord rebuke thee; where the word trans’ated, *the Lord*, is in both places *Jehovah*. As *Michael*, therefore, hath that name applied to him, which, without all controversy, denotes *self-existence*, he cannot be a *created angel*. Nothing but an unreasonable prejudice to mere sounds, can dispose us to think, that

¹ *Poeth. Works*, part 2, p. 62.

¹ Ch. iii. 12.

because

because he is described as *the archangel*, or *prince of the angelic host*, he is therefore of the number with those Beings, of whom he is the *head and ruler*; since the very same turn of argument will prove, that because *God* is called the *King of kings*, or *Christ, the Prince of the kings of the earth*^k, he is therefore the chief of *earthly* monarchs, and nothing more.

To what hath been said in relation to this second particular, it may be farther added, that the same host of celestial beings are called, not only the angels of *Michael*, and of the *Son of Man*, but also the angels of God the Father^l: from which intercommunity of appropriation, it must necessarily be inferred, that as *Michael* and *Christ* appear from hence to be the same person, so it must also appear, that *Christ* partakes of the same divine essence with God the Father, and is his co-equal in majesty, power, and dominion.

It is in the next place to be shewn, that *Christ*, under the names of *Michael*, *Jehovah*, or the *great prince which standeth for the children of Israel*, had not “ *the care of that*

^k Rev. i. 5. Ἀρχὴ τῶν βασιλέων τῆς γῆς.

^l Rev. iii. 5. Luke xii. 8. Heb. i. 6.

“ nation

“ nation assigned to him by the *Most High*,” as the portion of his inheritance ; which proposition is by the *Essay-writer* held in the affirmative^m, and a great part of his work rests upon the supposed truth of it.

But if *Christ*, as the guide and protector of the children of *Israel*, was himself the *Most High*, it must carry with it a contradiction to say, that he had the care of that people assigned to him, as the portion of his inheritance, by the *Most High*. St. Paul observes, that some of the *Israelites* were destroyed in the wilderness, because they tempted *CHRIST*ⁿ, which the divinely inspired *Psalmist* expresses by saying, that they tempted the MOST HIGH GOD^o.

And again, it is certain that the kingdom of *Israel* was not, according to the author's sense of the thing, assigned to *Christ*, the second person of the Trinity, as to its guardian angel, because this very same kingdom is also appropriated to the *Holy Spirit* : for the prophet *David*, in his last prophetic words, thus describes or entitles the divine Person, to whom he owed his inspiration—*The SPIRIT*

^m See *Essay*, P. 34, 45, 47, 48.

ⁿ 1 Cor. x. 9.

^o *Psalm*. lxxviii. 56. conf. *Exod.* xvii. 2, 7.

OF THE LORD *spake by me—the* GOD OF ISRAEL said, &c.

We have now gone through all the arguments by which this *angelic* system of government, invented purely for the sake of inserting *Jesus Christ* into the class of created angels, is supported. The author of them thinks they have given him a sufficient warrant for setting down the following conclusion—"It " is manifest, that, according to the Scriptures of the Old Testament," (he should have added, "and of the New," since two of his arguments out of five are taken from it) "angels were appointed to preside over people and nations *upon earth*." Not quite so manifest, I think, from the foregoing premises; the first of which is, a version of the LXX, which strongly savours of traditional Judaism, and contradicts the *Hebrew* text. 2. A quotation from an *apocryphal* book, wherein the word *αγγελος* is translated, *governing angel*. 3. An expression of St. *Paul*, relating to the *other world*. 4. The fall of angels *before the world*, alluded to by St. *Jude*. 5. The mention made of *human princes* by the prophet *Daniel*.

P P. 47.

CHAP. III.

His Objections against the Divinity of Christ answered.

IT is high time for me to inform my reader, that I have hitherto omitted to take notice of the *Jewish* evidence, alledged every now and then by the author in support of his opinions; and evidence in plenty he might have collected from *Jewish* writers, if it were possible for his opinions to be ten times worse than they really are. If their testimony were of any avail *against* the truth, Dr. *Middleton* would have stood a much fairer chance than he did, for shewing that the whole *law of Moses* was a mere human fiction, artfully framed by a cunning fellow, well versed in the *wisdom of Egypt*, to keep a superstitious and silly people under proper regulations^a.

Our author “chuses to lay before his reader
“ the opinion of the most sensible and learned
“ among the *ancient Jews*, as he finds it very
“ judiciously collected by *Eusebius*, bishop of

^a See his quotations from *Josephus* cont. App. and *Philo* de exitu—in his *Defence of the Letter*, &c. p. 27, 41.

“ *Cæsarea* in *Palestine*, who must be allowed
 “ to be a tolerable judge, because he lived
 “ *amongst them* in the land of *Judæa* .”

What is it, that we must allow him to be a
tolerable judge of ? that the opinions he hath
 collected were *really Jewish* ? nobody denies
 it. But as *Eusebius* did not flourish till to-
 wards the beginning of the fourth century,
 when the *Jews* had been for three hundred
 years employed in evading the true sense of
 the Scriptures, in order to baffle and confound
 the followers of *Jesus* ; how can it be ex-
 pected that their impure comments should
 breathe the uncorrupt spirit of christianity ?
 These are the men, whom he gravely dignifies,
 in his title-page, with the appellation of *ancient*
Hebrews, that is, *modern Jews*, who had en-
 deavoured to their utmost so to infect that air
 the Christians were to breathe in, as to breed
 a pestilence amongst them. Nay, the *author*
 himself, to the utter ruin of his whole scheme,
 so far as the *Jews* are concerned in it, con-
 fesses that ever “ since the coming of our
 “ Saviour, not being willing to abide by the
 “ expositions given to the Old Testament,
 “ they ran into numberless absurd contriv-

“ances of expounding the Scriptures according to hidden and cabalistical meanings’.”

But these, he observes, were the *more modern Jews*; that is, to use his own words, all the *Jews* who lived “since the coming of our “Saviour” were *modern*; and pray then, what sort of *Jews* must those have been, *amongst which Eusebius lived*? for if they commenced *absurd* and *modern* upon our Saviour’s coming, how is it possible for them to be *sensible* and *ancient* three hundred years after it?

At page 41, we find a quotation from *Eusebius*, which extends nearly throughout three pages, the conclusion of which runs thus—
 “All the *Hebrew* divines, *after* that God,
 “who is *over all*, and *after* his first born
 “Wisdom, pay divine worship to the third
 “and holy power, which they call the Holy
 “Spirit.” But surely these *Hebrew* divines have no authority for saying, that adoration is to be paid to the first-born Wisdom, *AFTER* that God who is over all; when a little backwarder, in the same quotation, they confess, that this first-begotten of the Father *far exceeds all created Beings*? The plain alternative is this: he is either a *created being*, or the

* P. 39, 40.

uncreated *God*; but he cannot be a *created being*, because he *far exceeds all created beings*; if so, divine worship is not to be paid to him *after*, or in subordination to the Father, but as the Scripture speaks, all men are to *honour the Son*, *EVEN AS they honour the Father* *.

Again he tells us, that “the *Jews* made a “*second essence* of the *Logos*, which was be-
“*gotten by the first cause*; and *Philo Ju-*
“*dæus* calls the *Logos* (δευτερος θεος) a *second*
“*God*, in whose image man was created.” It seems that *all the Hebrew divines* agree in these matters, and make the *Logos* a *secondary God*, one who is to receive a sort of divine adoration, inferior to that paid to *God, who is over all*. Now, I have the authority of a *Jew* for affirming, that *all the Hebrew divines* maintain the very contrary, and confess that the *Logos*, or second person of the Trinity, under another name, that of the *redeeming angel*, is strictly and properly to be esteemed *the very God*. For *rabbi Moses* thus gives his opinion concerning the divine person, who appeared to *Joshua* under an human shape, as *captain of the Lord's host*: “This angel,” says the above-named *Hebrew* divine, “is the *Angel-*

* John v. 23.

† P. 43.

“*Redeemer,*

“ Redeemer, who in *Exod.* xxxiii. 14. is called
 “ the *face of God*; but the *face of God* signi-
 “ fies GOD HIMSELF, AS ALL INTERPRETERS
 “ confess; of this same angel it is said, *my*
 “ name (the incommunicable name *Jehovah*)
 “ is in him.”

As there can be no perfect coincidence between the present *Jewish* plan and the *Christian*, the only possible use that can be made of their writings is, to extract such parts of them as contradict the apostate scheme, and to turn their own weapons backward upon themselves; which design hath been admirably well executed by *Raymund Martini*, a learned *Spaniard* of the thirteenth century, in his *Pugio Fidei*; who, by searching with indefatigable labour into all the machinations of this *Synagogue of Satan**, hath displayed that inconsistency which is always to be found in men who have no true principles, and hath confuted them out of their own mouths: which after all doth not shew that their senti-

* Iste angelus est angelus Redemptor, qui est facies Dei. *Exod.* xxxiii. 14. Atqui facies Dei significat IPSUM DEUM, ut fatentur OMNES interpretes. De hoc dicitur, *nomen meum in eo est*.—Cited by *Fagius*, upon *Josh.* v. 14.

† Rev. ii. 9. and iii. 9.

ments are of any *authority*, but rather that they are of none at all.

We know, that in the time of our blessed Saviour, the scribes and lawyers among the *Jews*, who ought to have been *instructed* by the sacred oracles, *into the kingdom of God*, had *taken away the key of knowledge*; and it is no where recorded, that from that day to this they ever returned it. Nay, ever from that time forwards, they grew continually worse and worse, as to their knowledge of the Holy Scripture; which they searched only to pervert; and being actuated by the utmost malice against *Him*, instead of whom they had desired a murderer to be released unto them, fell into as great a degree of blindness as those men of *Sodom*, who *wearied themselves to find the door* of the house, with the desperate resolution of affronting the divine persons inclosed within it. And though to us, who enter in by *Christ*, the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*, the Scripture is clear and open; yet to them it is as fast shut and closed, as that den into which the prophet *Daniel* was cast, with a stone laid upon the mouth of it, and sealed with the signet of heaven: nor hath the *purpose* of the king yet been *changed* concerning them.

Whatever

Whatever therefore *Philo* and his brethren may have been pleased to utter, about the *second cause*, the *most ancient of angels*, the *guardian of Israel*, and the *archangel subsisting with many names*—away with it all; let it return to the place from whence it came; and as a final answer to the author upon this subject, and to caution my reader against that trash of *Judaism*, with which the *Essay on Spirit* hath presented us; let me subjoin that earnest injunction of *St. Paul* to *Timothy*, given at a time, when it may reasonably be supposed there were many and much more ancient writings of this sort extant—GIVE NO HEED TO JEWISH FABLES.

We are now to enter upon the *Essay-writer's* objections against the divinity of *Christ*; most of which, instead of being sound arguments, are misapplied texts of Scripture, weak surmises, and groundless assertions; but that my work may be the shorter and the easier, I shall first beg leave to lay before the reader a few propositions, which I apprehend no *Christian* will, and no man of learning can, dispute the truth of; desiring only, that as they are very important, he will give them a serious and attentive consideration.

Prop. I. The name יהוה *Jehovah* doth express absolute *self-existence*.

Prop. II. There is but *ONE being* or *essence*, to which this *name* can be applied—*Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God, is ONE JEHOVAH, Deut. vi. 4.* which our *Saviour* himself affirms to be, the very first article of the *first of all the commandments*^{*}.

Prop. III. This *name* is applied, *ex concessio*, to *three persons*, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Prop. IV. If so applied, it must denote, that these *three persons* are, after some ineffable manner, really and truly *ONE*; because, by *Prop. 2.* there is but *ONE JEHOVAH*.

Prop. V. The fall of mankind was occasioned by an offence against the *supreme God*, not against any *created angel*.

Prop. VI. The salvation of mankind is not to be effected by the union of our nature with *created angels*, but with the *supreme God*.—*God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. 2 Cor. v. 19**.

Prop.

^{*} *Mark xii. 29.*

^{*} Dr. *Clarke* asserts, that “ the word *God* in Scripture “ never signifies a complex notion of *more persons than one*.” In answer to which it would be sufficient to shew, that such a *complex notion* is signified by the word *Jehovah*. But the
text

Prop. VII. We are to be reconciled and united to *him*, by means of *his* union with the human body of *Christ*.—*There is one mediator between God and men, the MAN, Christ Jesus.*

Having premised thus much, I proceed to the objections :

I. The first of which is borrowed from an *apocryphal* book of Scripture—For “ the wise son of *Sirach*, says our author, when speaking of the guardian angel of *Israel*, under the name of *Wisdom*, says, *I came out of the mouth of the Most High—He that MADE me caused me to rest, and said, let thy dwelling be in Jacob, and thine inheritance in Israel. He CREATED me in the beginning, before the world, and I shall never fail, &c.*”

Upon this he remarks, that this Being must be understood to have been made and *created*,

text of this 6th Prop. shews that the word *God* is applied in the same manner in the gospel ; to signify under *one word* the person of the *Son* who made, and the person of the *Father* who accepted the reconciliation. Whether the scheme of *Dr. Clarke* is not totally overthrown by this single passage, I leave the reader to consider. See *Cath. Doctr.* No. xiv.

Y P, 50, 51. Eccclus. xxiv. 1—12.

in

in the same sense as the light, when God said, *let there be light, and there was light*; and immediately after this, speaking by a figure of rhetoric, commonly called *tautology*, he says, “it is *likewise* to be observed, that this “angel of *Israel* is here declared to have been “a *created being*, in terms as plain as it is in “the power of language to express.” Very true, so it is, and we would have granted it, without being twice told of it: but on what principles, except those of popery, can the author establish, or unsettle any point of faith, from a book, which, with good and sufficient reasons, we hold to be uncanonical? Besides, it must be noted, that the *Wisdom of Sirach*, as we now have it, is nothing more than a *Greek* translation of an *Hebrew* original, in which we have some reason to suppose, that the term *created* was not to be found, because it is not used in that passage of the book of *Proverbs*, of which this is a plain imitation, and from whence the next objection is drawn.

II. For to the afore-mentioned observation, it is immediately added—“In the same *kind of style* (with the above passage from the “*son of Sirach*) it is, that *Solomon*, speaking “—in the person, and under the character “of *wisdom*, saith, *Jehovah possessed me in*
the

“ the beginning of his ways, before his works
 “ of old: I was set up from everlasting, from
 “ the beginning, or ever the earth was; when
 “ there were no depths, I was BROUGHT
 “ FORTH, &c.²” The word CREATED was
 plainly for his purpose, and therefore he *first*
 lays hold of that; as if the book of *Proverbs*
 were an imitation of the *Wisdom of Sirach*, not
 the *Wisdom of Sirach* an imitation of the book
 of *Proverbs*.

The *Arians*, in the days of *Athanasius*, laid
 a great stress upon this passage, in a manner
 putting the success of their whole cause upon
 the issue of it. They borrowed their sense of
 it from the *Septuagint*, which renders the
 words, יהוה קנני, *the Lord created me*; and
 descanted upon the word *created*, with as
 much confidence, as our author does upon
 the same word, borrowed from the *son of*
*Sirach*³: whereas the passage, when read in
 the original *Hebrew*, or in the *English* ver-
 sion, which rightly translates it, loses all its
 force, and becomes incapable of such an ap-
 plication.

² P. 52. Prov. viii. 22, &c.

³ The words of *Cornelius a Lapide* upon this occasion are—
 Hic locus erat *Achilles Ariarorum*, quo Christum creaturam
 esse probarunt, quia hic à dicunt, Deus κτισας με, *creavit me*.

The primitive Fathers, being many of them under the disadvantage of not understanding the *Hebrew* of the Old Testament, applied this passage to the human nature of *Christ*, which they supposed to be here spoken of in the same kind of stile as where he is said to be *the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*: to this purpose *Athanasius* instructs us, that *Solomon* “ doth not say, *he created* “ *me before his works*, that we should receive “ it as spoken of the divinity of the *Logos*; “ since it was the God-man, who (as man) “ was created *the beginning*^b of his ways, “ whom he afterwards manifested to us for “ our salvation.” The same is declared by *Epiphanius*, vol. i. 748. And *Pole*, upon this place, referring to *Salmazar*, who has collected their opinions, tells us, that the Fathers unanimously applied this passage to the humanity, or human soul, of the Messiah. The most ancient of the *Jews* likewise, after their manner of expressing the thing, held that the *soul of the Messiah* was created before the world :

^b The original is not כראשית, *in the beginning*, as our *English* version supposes it to be, but ראשית, *the beginning*. See what *St. Jerom* says upon the words ראשית and ἀρχή, in his comment on the 7th verse of *Psalm* xl. (in him the xxxixth.) Vol. III. p. 130. Ed. *Par.*

and

and what is very remarkable, in that little short prologue, which is set down before the description *Wisdom* gives of herself in the book of *Ecclesiasticus*, it is said, *Wisdom shall praise HERSELF*, (as we render it) but the *Greek* is ψυχὴν αὐτῆς, *her SOUL*. To this, it may be added, that most of the ancient theological writers, in strict agreement with the Holy Scriptures themselves, have determined, that Christ appeared as *man* to the patriarchs and prophets, long before his incarnation. But the shortest and the safest way to rescue this passage from the hands of the *Arians*, is to construe the *Hebrew* literally.

III. I have laboured hard to give the form of an argument to the next objection, but find the difficulty insurmountable. “ *Philo Judæus*,” it seems, “ observes, that the *archangel with many names*, was also called by “ the name of God :” and then the author proceeds to shew, from many places of Scripture, “ that the angel which acted as a guardian-angel to the seed of *Abraham*, and “ presided over the children of *Israel*, is “ called *Jehovah*.” From whence, he would conclude, I presume, that the name *Jehovah* is applied to a *created angel*. But in all this,

I cannot discover where his *medium* of proof lies: *Philo* says, that the *archangel* with many names is called by the *name of God*—we find that the angel, which presided over the children of *Israel*, is called *Jehovah*: these are the author's premises; but as the assertion of *Philo* is of no authority, no doctrine can be drawn from the Scripture under such an association.

As for the instances the *author* has offered from the Old Testament, in order to shew, that the same person, who is said to be the *angel of Jehovah*, is likewise mentioned under the direct name of *Jehovah*; before these can be of any service to him, there are two very important questions to be settled: the first is, whether the word *angel*, as applied in the Scripture to spiritual and invisible Beings, must necessarily denote a *created Being*? The second is, whether the name *Jehovah* can be applied to such a being? If both of these questions were determined in the affirmative, he would then have instanced something to the purpose: but to beg them both, and proceed to his instances, is not the practice of a fair or a sound critic.

I shall therefore not trouble either myself or my reader with the tedious labour of set-

ting all these misapplied instances in their proper light ; but observe only, that the word *angel*, as signifying literally ^d, *one that is sent*, may, and must be applied to the Second and Third Persons of the ever blessed Trinity ; because, according to those offices of *redemption* and *sanctification*, they have mercifully condescended to take upon them in the œconomy of grace, they are both said to be *sent* by the Father^e.

IV. The next objection is taken from that declaration of *Jehovah* to *Moses*, wherein it is asserted, that the *face of Jehovah* could not be *seen*, because, said he, *there shall no man see me and live*. But yet at the same time we are told, that *Jehovah* made *all his goodness to pass before Moses*, and permitted him to behold his *back-parts*, אַחֲרָי, which the *author* renders, *what followed* him. From whence he argues, that there must have been *two Jehovahs*, that is, a *visible Jehovah* following the *invisible*^f. But since, as the fact stands recorded, it is not said that *Moses saw* the face of any *Jehovah* ; and as it is not possible that there should be two *Jehovahs*, the one distinct from the other, unless the first article of

^d מלאך. .^e John v. 23.—xiv. 26.

^f *Essay*, p. 60, 61. Exod. xxxiii. 19, 20.

the first of all the commandments is a contradiction to the rest of the Scripture: I pass this over without any farther notice. See Prop. 1. 4.

V. The fifth objection presents us once more with the same impossibility, the existence of two *Jehovahs*. For the author sets down the following passage from the prophet *Zechariah*—*Sing and rejoice, O daughters of Zion; for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith Jehovah—and thou shalt know that the Jehovah of Hosts hath sent me unto thee*^s: and then observes, that “the *Jehovah of Zion* is plainly distinguished “from the *Jehovah of Hosts*, and acknowledged himself to be sent by him^h.” It proves, on the contrary, that the *sender* and the *sent* are essentially *one*. Nor is the *Jehovah of Zion* distinguished from the *Jehovah of Hosts*; because, the very person, whom the author here supposes to be distinguished from the *supreme Jehovah*, or God the Father, by the former name, is also expressly dignified with the latter. For, saith the prophet *Isaiah*, mine eyes have SEEN the King, the JEHOVAH OF HOSTSⁱ, which, when compared with *John*

^s Zech. ii. 10, 11.

^h P. 65.

ⁱ Isa. vi. 5.

xii. 41, settles the point: *These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, (the glory of Christ) and spake of him.*

VI. The sixth is not an objection, but a demonstration against himself; and I cannot conceive what advantage he proposed in bringing it out to view, for, taking it as granted that there are two *Jehovahs*, a superior and an inferior, he is pleased to observe hereupon, “ that this *Jehovah of Zion*, (whom I have
“ just proved to be the *Jehovah of Hosts*)
“ does not always declare himself to be de-
“ puted, but actually and literally speaks in
“ his own name, and calls himself *Jehovah*,
“ and saith, *I am the God of Abraham*; and,
“ *I am the God of Bethel*; and, *I brought*
“ *thee out of the land of Egypt*, &c. and posi-
“ tively prohibits *Moses* and the children of
“ *Israel* from worshipping any other God but
“ himself: *thou*, says he, *shalt have no other*
“ *Gods before me*: thereby seeming to forbid
“ even the worship of the supreme *Jehovah*,
“ the *Jehovah of Hosts**.” That is, in other
words—when the God, who brought the chil-
dren of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, commands them
to worship him, as the one only object of

* P. 66.

adoration, he *seems thereby* to forbid the worship of another God *superior* to himself. No: he thereby forbids the worship of all *inferior* Gods, and asserts that he himself is the *supreme*: for the argument, when drawn up, will stand thus—The *supreme God* is to be worshipped—but no other God, except him *who brought the children of Israel out of Egypt*, is to be worshipped—therefore, the God, who brought the children of *Israel* out of *Egypt*, is the *supreme God*. Here the author is under a very grand difficulty, and is far from appearing to be satisfied with his own solution of it¹. “It is to be observed, (says he) that “the *Hebrews* were far from being explicit “and accurate in their stile, but left great “room for the imagination of the reader to “supply and fill up the deficiencies^a.” And could the author seriously believe, that the *Hebrews*, that is the *Spirit of God* who spake

¹ Liqueat, veteribus *Judeis* nunquam in mentem venisse commentum illud, quod nostro seculo viris quibusdam doctis inter Christianos placuit; nempe eum, qui *Mosi* in rubo & monte *Sinai* apparuit & locutus est, merum fuisse angelum qui se Deum *Abrabami* appellaret, *Deique nomine* cultum divinum, sibi adhibitum, libenter admitteret. Nimirum absurda nimis, & plane horrenda est illa sententia. *Bulli Def. Fid. Nic.* Sect. I. cap. I: § 11. ^a P. 66.

by prophets and holy men amongst the *Hebrews*, hath not an *accuracy in his stile* sufficient to preserve his readers from falling into *Idolatry*? And that the capital doctrine of the Bible is to be settled, not by what *is said*, but by what is *not said*? not by the express words of Scripture, but by what the *imagination* is to *supply*? If this were true, such an infallible judge of controversy as the Pope, would seem to be necessary; and therefore the Papists have sometimes been very earnest in objecting to Protestants the ambiguity of the Scripture language.

VII. I pass on to the next objection, which is extracted from *St. Paul*^a: “ For (says this “ Apostle) *though there be that are called “ Gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (for “ there be Gods many, and Lords many) yet “ to us there is but one God, the Father, of “ whom are all things, and we in him; and “ one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all “ things, and we by him.* That is, there is “ but one supreme God, in comparison of “ whom, there is *none other but he*; and with “ regard to whom Jesus the Christ is to be “ called *Lord*, and not *God*.” In the verse

^a 1 Cor. viii. 5, 6.

• P. 87.

immediately preceding those which are here quoted, the Apostle gives a clear explanation of his meaning, by declaring the very same thing in a few words. *We know*, says he, *that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one.* After which, in the words now before us, he draws a contrast more at large, between the belief of *idolaters*, and that of *Christians*, opposing the one only and true God, to that tribe of celestial and terrestrial deities, which by the Heathens were *called Gods*, but, in reality, were nothing in the world. . The author imagines, that the Apostle here means to draw a *comparison* between the supreme God, and subordinate angels: for, says he, “ the term of “ *God* is to be attributed to the Son, as when “ we say, *there be Gods many.*” But if we say this in the same sense with *St. Paul*, as this writer seems to intend we should, we shall then convert the *Son of God* into an *heathen Idol ! a nothing in the world !*

It should here be observed, that when the Scripture speaks of *one God*, it doth certainly express the *unity* of the blessed Trinity ; and the appellation of *the Father*, ascribed to the *one God*, upon which this author and *Dr. Clarke* lay so great a stress, doth not here

mean the *person* of the *Father* as distinguished from the *Son* and *Holy Spirit* ; but denotes, as it does in many other places of the Scripture, the fulness of the Godhead which *dwelled bodily* in the person of *Christ*. So he himself hath taught us in terms as express as can be desired—*The Father that dwelleth in me, he doth the works* *.

But he carries on this objection in such a manner, that we shall be able to turn his evidence against himself. For this “ God the “ Father, says he, St. *Paul* characterizes as “ that God, who is *the blessed and ONLY* “ *Potentate, the King of Kings, and Lord of* “ *Lords, WHO ONLY hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto, WHOM NO MAN HATH SEEN, OR CAN* “ SEE¹.” This he allows to be a description of the *one only and supreme God* ; but it is a description of *Christ*. This is evident, first, from the context ; which, when the connection is preserved, runs thus—*Keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which he (the Lord Jesus Christ himself) shall shew, who (Christ) is the blessed and only Poten-*

* John xiv. 10. ¹ Eph. i. 3. 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16.

tate, &c. Secondly, because the *appearing* of *Christ*, here spoken of, *Christ* himself, through the power of the Godhead in him, is to manifest at the end of the world ; just as it is said of him after his resurrection, *on this wise SHEWED HE HIMSELF*¹. But thirdly and chiefly, because *Christ* is dignified with all those very attributes, which are here ascribed to the supreme God ; and we may take all the articles separately, and find parallels to them throughout. First, *who is the blessed and only Potentate*—so of *Christ* it is elsewhere said, that he *is the head of all principality and power*². 2. *The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*—so—he *hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS*³. 3. *Who only hath immortality*—so—in him *was LIFE*⁴. 4. *Who dwelleth in the light which no man can approach unto*—so—the city (the heavenly Jerusalem) *had no need of the sun, for the glory of God did lighten it, and THE LAMB IS THE LIGHT THEREOF*⁵.

I need not run this parallel through the last article, the *invisibility* of the Godhead, be-

¹ John xxi. 1.² Col. ii. 10.³ Rev. xix. 16.⁴ John i. 4.⁵ Rev. xxi. 23.

cause it is to be considered in a different capacity, as it furnishes the author with his next objection.

VIII. For, as concerning “the one, only invisible God,” he affirms very roundly, “that he cannot POSSIBLY be the same with that God, who *was manifested in the flesh*.” But by this manifestation, none have ever been so weak as to imagine, that the *Godhead* became *visible*, any farther than by its personal union with the human nature, which *was* visible: for when *Christ* became incarnate, though we did not see *God*, yet we *saw* the *person who was God*.

Without insisting afresh upon that description of *the Father*, (as he will have it) or, *one, only, invisible God*, which I have just now proved applicable to *Christ*; I shall set down two expressions, which at once must silence all cavils and disputes: for *Christ* affirms of the unbelieving *Jews*, that *they had both SEEN and hated, both him and his FATHER*⁷: and again he says to one of his disciples—*He that hath seen me, hath SEEN THE FATHER*⁸. In both these passages, it is evident to reason and common sense, that the

⁸ P. 88. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

⁷ John xv. 24.

⁸ John xiv. 2.

FATHER, or *Divine Essence*, could become visible only in respect of his union with the visible person of Christ. And this is such a direct demonstration that the *divine Essence* was actually *so united*, that Dr. Clarke and his *myrmidons* * never have, nor ever will be able to talk *sense* against it †.

IX. His next argument runs through 16 of his *sections* ‡, in which he hath collected many texts wherein *Christ* is mentioned, as receiving power from God—being *anointed with the oil of gladness above his fellows*, (mankind) being *made* Lord and *Christ*—raised from the dead—exalted to the right hand of God, &c. all of which relate to the human nature, and cannot possibly afford any evidence for the inferiority of the divine. And let it here be recollected, that the salvation of mankind does not depend upon the exaltation of a God, or of any other being, but of man only, who fell from God by sin, and through the *man Christ Jesus*, is re-united to him. It must be observed though, that four of the above sections begin with, *and as the Jews*, in which we are obliged with a repetition of that

* See *The Confessional*, p. 316. *first Edit.*

† See *Cath. Doctr.* chap. i. No. 38, and p. 107. *3d Edit.*

‡ From p. 89 to 106.

Rabbinical evidence, which hath already received its answer, at the beginning of this chapter.

X. “ To declare the *Father* and the *Son* to “ be *co-equal* and *co-eternal*, is by no means “ consistent with the relation that there is “ between father and son ^b.” With that relation, as it subsists among *men*, it is not: but this is no reason, why it should not be so with *God*; or even, that in all created beings it should be an inconsistency. As for example—*Light* is the offspring of *fire*, and yet *coeval* with it; for it is impossible to conceive a time, when the sun existed without emitting light; and were the sun eternal, light would be co-eternal with it: as was very judiciously observed by Mr. *Leslie* ^c to the *Unitarians*, many years ago; and it is not answered yet.

XI. “ If

^b P. 141.

^c Theolog. Works, fol. vol. I. p. 227. I saw this great writer lately mentioned under the name of *that furious high-church bigot* Leslie—the value of which epithets may easily be estimated, if we consider that the vender of them is himself a *furious no-church bigotted Socinian*: for neither the *Socinians* nor the *Quakers* could ever bear the name of Mr. *Leslie*: whose political circumstances being now out of the question, his incomparable skill as a controversialist, acknowledged even by a *Bolingbroke*, ought to recommend

his

XI. “ If the substance of the Father be
 “ the same undivided substance with the
 “ Son, and the substance of the Son became
 “ incarnate, then it will follow that the sub-
 “ stance of the Father became incarnate
 “ also.” If the substance of the Father and
 of the Son were *so united* as not to be distin-
 guished into *two different persons*, this conse-
 quence would necessarily follow. But as the
 Scripture doth not teach us, and the church
 doth not maintain, that the Father and the
 Son are one person, he hath reasoned upon a
 false supposition, and the doctrine of the in-
 carnation is not chargeable with any such ab-
 surdities as this author hath taken great pains
 to fix upon it.

XII. The last objection I shall take notice
 of, is drawn from the hypostatical union of
 the two natures in the person of *Christ*, and
 is as follows—“ If this proposition (says he)
 “ be taken for granted, which may be found
 “ *totidem verbis* in the *Athanasian* creed, that
 “ *as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man,*
 “ *so God and man is one Christ* ; and if this

his writings to those who would understand the doctrines
 and interests of the Church of England, in opposition to
 the Papists on one hand, and Sectarian Enthusiasts on the
 other.

^d P. 148.

“ other

“ other proposition be allowed, which is to
 “ be found as explicitly in the Scriptures,
 “ that this one *Christ suffered* for the sins of
 “ mankind; then it must follow, of conse-
 “ quence, that *Christ* suffered in his *godhead*,
 “ as well as his humanity; since otherwise, it
 “ would have been the *man Jesus*, and not
 “ *Jesus the Messiah*, or *Christ*, that suffered
 “ for the sins of men *.”

Hitherto he hath objected as an *Arian*, and talked about the *most antient of angels*, &c. but now, he is changed on a sudden into the character of a *Socinian*: for this very argument hath ever been advanced and insisted upon by them, to prove that *Christ* was nothing more than a mere man; because, say they, if God became an individual person with man, God must have *suffered*; which it is not possible for him to do. In answer to this, I must recommend to his consideration the two following texts, and if he can, either under the character of an *Arian*, or a *Socinian*, get clear of them, he may proceed with his objection—*Herein is the love of GOD, that HE LAID DOWN HIS LIFE for us* *. And again—*Feed the church of GOD which HE hath*

* P. 148.

* 1 John iii. 16.

purchased with HIS OWN BLOOD †. It is incumbent upon him, therefore, if he believes the divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, to shew us, that these passages do not prove, that the *person*, who suffered for us upon the cross *as man*, was *God* as well as *man* ^h.

CHAP. IV.

Objections to the Divinity of the Holy Ghost answered.

I. “**T**HE Holy Spirit must be an intelligent agent, separate and distinct “ from God, because he is said to be *sent* by “ him : for it is manifest that God cannot “ send himself ; because those terms imply a “ contradiction ⁱ.” It hath already been proved ^h, that the *sender* and the *sent* may be essentially one ; and as for the supposed *contradiction* of God’s *sending himself*, it arises merely from his begging of the question, that

† Acts xx. 28.

^h N. B. These three last objections are intermixed with his *remarks upon the creeds*.

ⁱ P. 78.

^h See the preceding chapter, Sect. 5.

there

there is but one *person* in the divine essence ; but the Scripture shews that there are *three*, which takes the contradiction away.

II. His next objection is an inference drawn from the following expression—*Jehovah and his Spirit*¹; as if, by the usage of the particle *and*, it must necessarily follow, that they are separate and distinct beings. But neither will this observation hold any more than the former; for *Christ* thus expresses himself—*I AND my father are ONE*; where, though the particle *and* may seem to disjoin the Father from the Son, yet the whole sentence expressly asserts their union: and *St. John*, speaking of the whole three persons, calls them *the Father, the Word, AND the Holy Ghost*, and yet adds—*and these three are ONE*. So likewise, when our Lord commanded his disciples to baptize *in the name of the Father, AND of the Son, AND of the Holy Ghost*², though he inserts the particle *and*, upon which the author grounds his argument, yet he withal expresses the *unity* of the Trinity: for though *three persons* are mentioned, he bids them not baptize in the *names*, but (*εἰς τὸ ὄνομα*) in *THE NAME*: upon which the

¹ Ibid.—Isa. xlviii. 16.

² Matt. xxviii. 19.

excellent

excellent Bishop *Andrews* thus comments—

“ If we will stay yet, but a little, at our baptism, and hearken well; as we hear that the Holy Ghost is God, so shall we that he is God in *Unity*. For there we hear but, in *nomine*, but of *one name*. Now as the *Apostle* reasoneth, (Gal. iii. 16.) *Abrahæ dictæ sunt promissiones & semini ejus. Non dicit seminibus, quasi in multis; sed, tanquam in uno, semini ejus.* To *Abraham*, and his *seed*, were the promises made; he saith not to the *seeds* as of *many*, but to his *seed*, as of one. So we are baptized, *non in nominibus, quasi multis; sed in nomine, quasi uno*; not in the *names*, as of many, but in the *name*, as of one: *one name*, and one nature or essence. *Unum sumus* (saith *Christ*) of two of them: *unum sunt* (saith *St. John*) of all three; this we hear there.”

III. “ In the books of *Judges* and *Samuel*, it is not said, that it was *Jehovah*, but the *Spirit of Jehovah*, which came upon *Othniel*, and *Gideon*, and *Jeptha*, and *Sampson*, and *Saul*, and *David*, to assist them in the government of *Israel*, and the execution

“ of their office °.” The last objection was built upon a particle of *three* letters; that now before us, hath nothing more to rest upon, than the slender foundation of *two*; for he affirms, it is not said, that it was *Jehovah* himself, but the *Spirit of Jehovah*, which inspired and actuated the illustrious persons above-mentioned. But the very first instance he refers us to for a proof of this assertion, shews us, on the contrary, that the same person, who is said to be the *Spirit of Jehovah*, is likewise mentioned under the direct name of *Jehovah* himself, which the *author* is pleased to affirm he is not. For of *Othniel* it is said, that *the SPIRIT OF JEHOVAH came upon him, and he judged Israel; and went out to war; and JEHOVAH (the same spirit, which enabled him to go out to war) delivered the king of Mesopotamia into his hand.* In like manner, the *Spirit of Jehovah* is asserted to be very *God*, in the passage he refers to concerning *Saul*; for the prophecy of *Samuel*, with relation to this matter, is thus worded—*The SPIRIT OF JEHOVAH will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with*

° *Ibid.* See Judg. iii. 10.—vi. 34.—ix. 29.—xiii. 25.
 1 Sam. x. 6.—xvi. 13.

them, and shalt be turned into another man : and let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion shall serve, for God is (or will be) with thee.

IV. “ St. John plainly calleth that *Holy Spirit* by which he was inspired with the “ book of *Revelations*, an *angel* : for this “ revelation was signified to St. John by an “ angel sent from *Christ* ; and yet through “ the whole book he calls this revelation the “ dictates of *the Spirit*. *He that hath an ear, “ let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the “ churches* ^p.” In this we have a grand specimen of the author’s talent in explaining the Scripture ; for the words here set down, were not spoken by the *angel*, or by St. John, but by *Christ* himself, from among *the seven golden candlesticks* ^q. This is a sufficient answer ; but I cannot leave this remark without first admitting it to be true, and then tracing a contradiction or two, which must of necessity follow from it. First, if that angel, which signified to St. John the scenes described in the book of *Revelations*, was the *Holy Spirit* ; then, as it was but one and the same angel of *Jesus Christ* ^r, which, from beginning to end,

^p P. 106. Rev. ii. 7. 11. 17.—iii. 6. 13. ^q *Ibid.* i. 13—18, &c. ^r Chap. i. 1. Ch. ult. 16.

presented all these things before his imagination, it follows, that the *Holy Spirit* is not to be worshipped; because, when St. *John* offered to pay adoration to the angel, which signified or shewed to him the things he then heard and saw, he was forbid to do it, and at the same time directed to the one only proper object of warship, the supreme God¹. Again, as this angel declared to St. *John* that he was his fellow-servant, and of his brethren the prophets²; then, if this angel was the *Holy Spirit*, it must appear, that he is a fellow-servant with the prophets which he inspired, that is, bound to SERVE or worship the same God: but—all Scripture is given by inspiration of GOD³—and then, if any thing follows, it is, that God is to worship himself.

V. “ Although the Virgin *Mary* is positively said to have been found with child of the *Holy Spirit*, and to have conceived of the *Holy Spirit*; yet the person sent to her from God upon this occasion, calls himself an angel, and in particular, the angel Gabriel that standeth in the presence of God⁴.” The angel *Gabriel* was sent from God to fore-

¹ V. 9.

² *Ibid.*

³ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

⁴ P. 107. Matt. i. 18. 20. Luke i. 19. 26.

warn the Virgin of a future efficacy from the *Holy Spirit*, and speaks of the *Holy Spirit* (whom he characterizes as the *Most High*) as of another person ; not that he himself was the *Holy Spirit*, as the author imagines, and seems to be so pleased with the discovery, that he thinks it something *very remarkable*.

Now we are upon this subject, I must beg leave to remind him, that *Jesus*, the *holy thing which was born* of the Virgin *Mary*, was called the *Son of God*, because he was begotten of the *Holy Ghost* ; which, on more accounts than one, deserves his very serious consideration, and he would do well to clear it up. The very same truth may be collected from many other passages of holy writ ; but the following instance may be sufficient—*God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the Fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his SON*^x : which *God*, who spake in time past by the *prophets*, and in the latter days by *his Son*, is by *St. Peter* called the *Holy Ghost* : for, says he, *in old time, holy men of God, the prophets, spake as they were moved by the HOLY GHOST*^y.

^x Heb. i. 1, 2.

^y 2 Pet. i. 21. conf. Luke i. 68, &c.

From all which, it manifestly appears, as I have already observed, that the whole undivided godhead is in the Scripture frequently represented as the *Father* of the *man Jesus*, and that the *Holy Spirit*, which begat him of the Virgin, is the very and supreme God; because the angel *Gabriel* calls *his* power the *power of the HIGHEST* *. Nay, the very *devils* themselves, could, with a *loud voice*, call out upon *Jesus* their conqueror, as the *Son of the most HIGH GOD* †; and here the author introduces what he supposes to be a created and subordinate angel *upon this occasion*.

Now we have gone through all the arguments offered in the *Essay*, with the intent of degrading the Son and Holy Spirit to the rank of created beings; it will be proper to enquire, how the writer of it, in allowing them divine worship, can possibly clear himself from the charge of *idolatry*, which the *Arians*, upon their principles, have never yet been able to do? Why, he confesses “that angels, as angels, have no right to divine worship or “adoration on their own account; but when “angels are commissioned from God, with “any degree of power over us,” (which they

* Luke i. 35.

† Matt. v. 7.

never are, being only *ministring spirits*) “and
 “are sent in his name; then it cannot be
 “idolatry to pay them a proportionate de-
 “gree of adoration; because such adoration
 “or worship not being paid them on their
 “own account, but on account of the autho-
 “rity which hath been delegated to them,
 “terminates in the one only and supreme
 “God^b.”

Thus the difficulty is solved! we are not
 guilty of idolatry in paying divine adoration
 to *creatures*, because in them we worship
God; which is the very excuse *Bartholomew
 Malam^c* gave for himself, when he knelt down
 and worshipped *George Fox*, the Quaker;
 saying, that he did not worship *George Fox*
 himself, but *the light in George Fox*; that is,
 he adored the said *George Fox*, *not upon his
 own account*, as *George Fox*, but as one *com-
 missioned from God, with a degree of power
 over us*, raised by the irresistible workings of
 the Spirit, from the state of a mechanic, to
 that of an inspired preacher, *a son of thunder*
 uttering a voice upon *Mount Sion*, from the
 four winds, and *sent in the name of God*. If
 the learned will pardon me, for mentioning

^b P. 82, 83.

^c Leslie Theol. Works, vol. ii, p. 619.

the name of *Cicero*, in the same page, with that of the most illiterate *George Fox*; I think the compliment he makes *Scipio Africanus* pay to *Publius*, “*scito te deum esse*,” proceeded from a like principle with that above-mentioned: so that *Bartholomew Malm* did nothing more than sing *Te Deum* to *George Fox*, as the great *Scipio* did to *Publius*, and as the *Essay-writer* would persuade us we may lawfully do to created beings, our fellow-servants. But doth he not perceive, that this method of reasoning will excuse all the *saint* and *angel* worship, professed by the modern and superstitious members of the church of *Rome*, and hitherto so justly renounced by Protestants? For as oft as they are warmly attacked upon this article, their method is, to secure a retreat in the very distinction here advanced by the author, and as oft as confuted, still to insist upon it, that the incense they offer to created beings, ascends through them to the supreme God, and tends to the abundant increase of his honour and glory.

It is, I apprehend, with a retrospect view to this argument, that the author afterwards delivers his opinion, concerning that right which God himself hath to the worship of

his creatures; for the case is stated in such a manner, as seemingly to favour the possibility of a title to adoration in inferior beings. The sentiment is borrowed from Sir *Isaac Newton*, though I would hope that great man never intended to make so bad an use of it, and the whole remark is this—"The worship which is due from man to God, is on account of the *dominion* he hath over him*.

* That divine worship is due from man to God *only* on account of his *dominion*, is not true; for the service of mankind, according to the testimony of Scripture, and the reason of the thing itself, is deduced from the perfections and attributes of the object of worship. We are commanded to worship Him that is *perfect* with *perfection* (1); the *Holy one* with *holiness* (2); the *mighty one* with *humility* (3); and the *merciful* with *mercy* (4) toward our fellow servants. Sir *Isaac* doth indeed suppose, that God, as God, is *related* to man only on account of his *dominion*; but the observation will not hold. His words are these, "dicimus *Deus Israelis*—non dicimus "*æternus Israelis, infinitus Israelis, perfectus Israelis* (5)." But God is called in Scripture the *Holy one of Israel*, and the *Mighty one of Israel*: and this relation being recognized in some of the attributes, no reason can be given why it should not obtain equally in the rest. If 1 *Sam.* xv. 29, be compared in the *Hebrew* with *Jer.* xv. 18, it will also appear, that the *eternal one of Israel* is the best construction of the former text,

(1) *Matth.* v. 48. (2) *Lev.* xi. 44, 45. (3) 1 *Pet.* x. 6. (4) *Luke* vi. 36. (5) *Newt. Princ.* p. *anteponit*.

“ So that the Son becometh our *God*, not so much on account of his having been employed in the creation, and *that by him God created the worlds*, as because all judgment is committed to him, this being the great *obligation* of all duty^d. ”

But, to worship God as the *Creator* of the world, is also to worship him as the supreme ruler of it ; for the act of creation, and the right of supremacy, are inseparable. *The earth is the LORD's*, saith the Psalmist, *and the fulness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein* : to which he immediately subjoins the reason, why the LORD hath this dominion over the world, and all its inhabitants — *for (or because) he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods*^e. Were it the *dominion* of God, independent of his power as Creator, which lays us under the obligation of worship, then St. *Paul*, when he condemned the idolatry of the *Gentiles*, should have stated their crime differently : But he has blamed them only for worshipping the *creature*, rather than the *Creator*^f ; which plainly shews what it is that entitles God to the adoration of mankind ; they are his

^d P. 100, 101.

^e Ps. xxiv. 1, 2.

^f Rom. i. 25,

creatures, and therefore they must adore him.

This principle of *dominion*, if it were rested in, would excuse all the abominable idolatry of the *Pagans*, who paid divine honours to the natural rulers, the sun, moon, stars, &c. which God hath appointed to *rule* over the day, and over the night, because they deemed them to be the *Gods which GOVERN the world*²; and the contest between ancient believers and unbelievers, always turned upon this point, whether these natural *rulers* were self-existent, and had power essential in themselves, or whether they derived it from a *Creator*, who being such, was therefore alone to be *worshipped*. But there is another capital error in this assertion; for, argues he, “the Son becometh *our God*, because *all judgment is committed unto him*.” Now, as far as all judgment is committed to the Son, he is not *our God*; because, as far as all judgment is committed to him, he is man; for which reason St. Paul declared to his audience of philosophers at *Athens*, that God will judge the world by that MAN (*ὁ υἱος*) whom he hath ordained³: and he is not *our God* by being *man* only, but by being *Emmanuel*, God with us, that is, God incar-

² *Wisdom* xiii. 2.

³ Acts xvii. 31.

nate. As far as he is a person of the Godhead, he hath judgment essentially in himself; for *vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith JEHOVAH*¹. Wherefore, let us turn his arguments which way soever we will, and set them in what light we please, still, every way, nothing but error is to be found in them; and, therefore, without pursuing them any farther, I may obviate them all at once, by subjoining the words of God himself, by the prophet *Isaiah*, in relation to this very article. *Thus saith God the LORD, HE THAT CREATED the heavens, and stretched them out—I am JEHOVAH, that is my name, and my glory will I not GIVE TO ANOTHER, neither my praise to graven images*². No person, but the one *Creator*, can have the glory of being called by the name *Jehovah*, or be entitled to any degree of that praise which is due thereupon: and he who is the supreme Creator of the universe, doth here declare, as full as words can express it, that he will not commission any OTHER Being to receive divine adoration, since this is due only to himself—*THOU SHALT WORSHIP THE LORD THY GOD, AND HIM ONLY SHALT THOU SERVE*³.

¹ Rom. xii. 19. from *Deut.* xxxii. 35, 36.

² *Isa.* xlii. 5, 8.

³ *Matt.* iv. 10.

CHAP. V.

Wherein the Extent and Validity of his Conclusion is examined.

HERE we shall have an opportunity of seeing what opinion our author entertains of the merits of his own performance, and the strength of his reasonings : how much his conclusion amounts to, and how much, according to the plan upon which he has proceeded, it ought to amount to. I shall first set down the whole, as it stands in his book, then divide it into particular articles, and make a separate remark upon each of them. His conclusion is this :

“ I apprehend, therefore, it is manifestly
 “ shewed in these papers, that from the con-
 “ sideration of the nature of spirit, by the
 “ light of reason it appears, there can be but
 “ one God, that is, one supreme intelligent
 “ agent ; which one God may, however,
 “ create an infinite series of spiritual agents,
 “ in subordination one to another ; some of
 “ which may, by an authority communicated
 “ to them from the supreme God, act as
 “ Gods,

“ *Gods*, with regard to those inferior beings,
 “ who are committed to their charge. I ap-
 “ prehend it likewise appears from the senti-
 “ ments of the *Jews*, as well as from the
 “ Scriptures, both of the Old and New Tes-
 “ tament, that this is the method of govern-
 “ ment, which the Almighty hath been
 “ pleased to pursue in the œconomy of this
 “ universe, still reserving to himself that in-
 “ communicable quality of *supreme*, which it
 “ would be a contradiction to suppose him
 “ divested of, either with or without his will;
 “ that is, either by his own consent, or by
 “ necessity^m.”

ARTICLE I.

“ I apprehend, therefore, it is manifestly
 “ shewed in these papers, that, from the con-
 “ sideration of the nature of spirit, by the
 “ light of reason, it appears”—

ANSWER.

Nothing, concerning the spiritual or invi-
 sible world, can *really* appear by the light of
 unassisted human reason; which, borrowing
 all its fund of ideas from the senses of the
 body, is circumscribed by the objects of the

^m P. 113, 114.

sensible world, and hath no possible means of obtaining any certain knowledge of *things spiritual*. Many things, indeed, may seem to appear, which, in truth, are nothing but the conceptions of the brain, and have no existence any where else *in rerum natura*. One speculative disquisitor may regulate the spiritual world in this manner, and another in that; but so long as revelation is out of the question, they can neither support their own systems, nor confute that of another person.

For these reasons, therefore, and others before mentioned, it cannot be expected, that, from this topic of argumentation, any thing *real*, or worth our notice, should appear upon the important subject now in hand: and, indeed, to consider any doctrine by the light of nature and reason, when there is that of revelation ready at hand, and professedly giving its assistance, is every whit as imprudent and absurd, as for a man to reject daylight, and an open road to travel in, that he may shew his genius by taking a solitary walk amongst bogs and pits in the dark, when it is ten to one but he tumbles headlong into the first that lies in his way.

ARTICLE II.

“ There can be but one God, that is, but
“ one supreme intelligent agent.”

ANSWER.

By *agent* the author means what we intend to express by the word *person* : but the *Essay on Spirit* hath nothing to prove that the *supreme nature* is only *one person*. Dr. Clarke indeed assures us, that this is the *first principle of Natural Religion* * : which assertion, if it were true, would only shew, that *Natural Religion* is the same thing with *Deism*, whose first principles are opposite to the Gospel. But it is a notorious matter of fact, that this unity of person was least known to those who were under the influences of nature. The words of *Cicero* on this subject are well worth observing—*Omnibus innatum est et in animo quasi insculptum, esse DEOS* †. “ It is a truth innate, and as it were engraven upon the mind, that there are Gods.” If it be enquired, what principles are dictated by reason independent of revelation, the testimony of *Cicero* who wrote before the Gospel, and spoke

* See Cath. Doctr. Pref. p. 32. Edit. 3.

† Cic. de Nat. D. 2. 4.

in the simplicity of his heart, is of much better authority than that of Dr. *Clarke*, who wrote after it, and was promoting the ends and interests of a private system.

The *unity* of the *supreme nature* is plainly taught by the sense of the word *Jehovah*, as it stands in that text of *Deuteronomy*—*Jehovah thy God is ONE JEHOVAH*. But this author, contrary to all others I have yet heard of, whether Jews or Christians, hath advanced the unscriptural and senseless doctrine of *two Jehovahs*, a *Jehovah of Zion*, and a *Jehovah of Hosts**: and therefore, although it is the greatest of all truths that the supreme nature is but *One*, the author of an *Essay on Spirit* is the only man in the world who hath no right to assert it.

ARTICLE III.

“ Which one God, however, may create
“ an infinite series of spiritual agents, in sub-
“ ordination one to another.”

ANSWER.

True, God may do this; but unless it is proved, that *Christ* and the *Holy Ghost* are of this number, no progress is made in the

* See Chap. 3. § 5. *supr.*

argument : why was it not affirmed then that they are *creatures* ? for whether this appears or not, we are sure it was the author's intent that it should ; and his premises, if they are sound and good, prove a great deal more than he hath thought proper here to set down in his conclusion.

ARTICLE IV,

“ Some of which (created spirits) may, by
“ an authority communicated to them, from
“ the supreme God, act *as Gods*, with regard
“ to those inferior beings who are committed
“ to their charge.”

ANSWER.

It ought to have been—“ some of which may be dignified with the incommunicable name *Jehovah*, declared to be *supreme*, and adored as *Creators* of the universe ; and yet after all, be in reality, not *Gods*, but *creatures*.” As for their being a kind of *quasi dei*, assuming to themselves the honour of self-existence, and suffering divine worship to be paid to them, only because they were *sent in the name of God*, it is absurd and impossible ; for a vicegerent or ambassador is never honoured with the title of the monarch he represents,

sents, or admitted to sit as his equal upon the throne with him".

ARTICLE V.

" I apprehend it, likewise, appears from
 " the sentiments of the *Jews*, as well as from
 " the Scriptures, both of the Old and New
 " Testament, that this is the method of go-
 " vernment the Almighty hath been pleased
 " to pursue, in the œconomy of this uni-
 " verse."

ANSWER.

As for the modern *Jews*, I have shewed that they are not qualified to give their evidence in relation to this or any other point of *Christian* doctrine; and the author himself hath entered a disqualification against them, without attempting to reverse it. As for the

* Nefas est cogitare, histrioniam aliquando exercuisse angelos, et deum incommunicabile nomen ipsis communicasse, aut talem representationem, in quâ creaturâ omnia, quæ Dei sunt, sibi attribuat. Recte etiam doctissimus Camero: sane, inquit, *patroni clientum personas sæpe induunt; at ne fando quidem unquam auditum est, ullum legatum, cum principis sui mandata proponit, aliter loqui quam in tertiâ personâ: princeps meus hæc dicit. Cujus rei illustre testimonium habemus apud prophetas, apud quos nimirum solennis formula est, Dicit dominus, &c.* *Defensio Fid. Necæn. Sect. 1, Cap. i. § 11.*

method

method of government, or angelic system of politics here alluded to, if the reader thinks it worth his while to turn back to the page in which I have summed up the evidence alleged in support of it, I dare be answerable for his *apprehending* no such thing.

ARTICLE VI.

“ Still reserving to himself that incommunicable quality of *supreme*, which it would be a contradiction to suppose him divested of, &c.”

ANSWER.

True, it would be a *contradiction* for the *supreme* to be divested of this his incommunicable quality ; but the *supreme nature* may still be supreme, without being reduced to an unity of person : and our Essayist must reason in another manner than he hath done, before he will have any right to conclude, that the *Son* and *Holy Spirit*, by subsisting in the unity of the Divine Nature, must thereby divest it of its supremacy.

Such is this mighty conclusion ; in the road to which, we have been entertained with romantic speculations of physiology, and perverted texts of Scripture, cemented together with the *Fables of Judaism*.

CHAP. VI.

His Enquiry into the Sentiments of the Primitive Fathers of the Christian Church considered.

OUR author having thus summed up his doctrine in brief, as he apprehends it manifestly to appear from his premises, is pleased to assure us, in the next place, that “ if we consult the opinions of the Fathers upon this subject, for the first three hundred years after Christ, we shall find them all universally agreeing in the afore-mentioned doctrine : as may appear by consulting *Justin Martyr, Athenagoras, Tatian, Irenæus, the Author of the Recognitions, Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, Origen, Gregory Thaumaturgus, Dionysius of Alexandria, Lactantius, &c.* ”

The *afore-mentioned doctrine*, which we are to find them *all universally agreeing in*, is, that the *Son* and *Holy Spirit* are neither of them really God, but act only *as Gods*, and

yet are to receive divine adoration from inferior beings. But where are his *proofs*? they come next; because something is to *appear*, upon *consulting the Fathers*. No; quite another matter: the thing, it seems, is so clear, that “it is *needless* to produce any quotations “out of them, as this point is plainly given “up by three of the most learned persons of “the last age, which are, the judicious Mr. “*Chillingworth*, the learned bishop *Bull*, and “the discerning Dr. *Cudworth* ^p.”

How the case really stands with these three divines, shall be considered, after I have laid before the reader a much more powerful reason for that pretended *needlessness*, by which this author would excuse himself from the trouble of quoting; which is, that all the Fathers he has mentioned, (one only excepted) are universally against his *afore-mentioned doctrine*. But as the extracts I should make from them, would, if set down in their several originals, be calculated only for the satisfaction of the learned, who may as well turn to the books themselves, I may be excused from increasing the bulk of these papers by giving

them at length, and shall therefore only refer to the places at the bottom of the page¹.

And, not to leave my *English* reader quite in the dark, I shall beg leave here to offer one argument, which of itself is sufficient to shew, that all the most early members of the *Christian* church were universally against *his doctrine*; and such an argument it is, as both the learned and unlearned must immediately perceive the force of.

Lucian, who lived as early as the days of *Adrian*, (that is, about the beginning of the second century, two hundred years before the council of *Nice*) and was initiated into the

¹ *Just. Mart.* ad *Diogn.* Epist. Ed. Par. p. 501. ὅτις ὁ αὐτ., &c. Resp. ad *Orthod.* p. 295. οὐκ ἔστι θεὸς, &c.—*Athenag.* p. 10. *ibid.* ἀλλ' ἑστὶν ὁ υἱοῦ, &c.—*Tatian.* Orat. cont. Græc. p. 145. *ibid.* *Irenæus.* adv. Hæres. lib. iv. c. 11. Dominus enim *myster*, &c. and lib. iii. c. 8. ipse enim *infectus*, &c.—*Author of the Apost. Const.* lib. vii. c. 42. Καὶ οὐκ ὁμοῦς ἱσμεν, &c.—*Tertull.* adv. *Prax.* c. 3. Numerum et dispositionem Trinitatis, &c.—*Clem. Alexand.* Admon. ad Gen. p. 5. and 6. Νῦν δέ, &c. *Pædag.* l. i. c. 8. p. 113.—*Origen contr. Cels.* lib. vi. p. 287. οὐ γὰρ τὸν ἀγνόντων, &c. and περὶ ἀρχῶν, as cited in *Jerom.* tom. ix. p. 121. Nunquam utique in Unitate Trinitatis, &c.—*Greg. Thaum.* Ed. Par. p. 1. Τριάς τελέσια, &c.—For the opinion of *Dionysius of Alexandria*, see *Athanasius*, tom. i. p. 559, &c. *Ignat. Ep.* ad *Smyrn.* δοξαζόμενον Χριστὸν τοῦ ΘΕΟΝ.

Christian faith, but afterwards apostatized to Paganism; this *Lucian*, I say, in one of his dialogues, wherein the interlocutors make it their business to scoff at the Christian religion, puts the following speech into one of their mouths—Τῷ μέδοντι θεῷ, μέγαν, ἀμβροτον, ἀθανάτων, υἱὸν Πατρὸς, Πνεῦμα ἐκ Πατρὸς ἐκπορευόμενον, ἐν ἐκ τριῶν, καὶ ἐξ ἐνὸς τρία. ταῦτα νομίζει Ζηνα, τὸν δὲ ἦγε θεῶν. *The almighty God, great, immortal, and celestial, the Son of the Father, the Spirit proceeding from the Father, ONE of THREE, and THREE of ONE: THESE you must suppose to be Jove, THIS you must esteem as God.* To which another makes answer by way of ridicule—οὐκ οἶδα γὰρ τί λέγεις· ἐν τρία, καὶ τρία ἐν. *I don't understand what you mean: one is three, and three are one!*

This of *Lucian*, though it is but a jeer, yet it is so strongly expressed, as to afford us a direct proof, that the doctrine of a *Trinity in Unity*, was in his time professedly subsisting in the church; for it is not any one particular writer, or two, or three, but the whole body of *Christians*, he here aims at. And therefore, it appears as manifestly, that the doctrine of the *Trinity*, according to our present

* *Lucian. Oper. fol. p. 1121.*

sense of it, was then universally professed by the *Christians*, as it does from another expression of the same *Lucian*, that they then universally maintained the *resurrection of the dead*: for he derides them all, as a set of poor creatures, who amused themselves with the vain hope of being made totally immortal*.—*Fas est et ab hoste doceri.*

As for Mr. *Chillingworth*, the author favours us with a posthumous letter of his, given in his life, as written by *Des Maizeaux*, p. 51. which is an answer to a friend, who desired to know what judgment might be made of *Arianism*, from the sense of antiquity. If this letter is genuine, what are we to do? are we to sit still, and be influenced by the authority of a name? or are we to judge for ourselves, and lament the instability of Mr. *Chillingworth*? The latter of these being the more rational practice, I shall take the liberty to remark, that Mr. *Chillingworth* hath grossly misrepresented the sense of antiquity, at the beginning of his letter; and given, not only an unfair, but an injudicious state of the case, at the end of it. He tells his friend, that “even in *Athanasius* himself, the greatest

* Πεινικασι γαρ αυτης οι κακοδαιμονες, το μ' ολον αβαντατισθαι. De Mort. Peregr.

“adversary

“adversary of the (*Arian*) doctrine, he may find that the eighty Fathers, which condemned *Samosatenus*, affirmed expressly—*that the Son is not of the same essence with the Father.* Which is to contradict formally the council of *Nice*, which decreed *the Son co-essential with the Father.*” The eighty Fathers, who condemned *Paul of Samosata*, did not deny that the Son was of the same essence of the Father; neither did they formally contradict the council of *Nice*. This crafty fellow, *Paul*, made a wicked use of the word *homoousios*, and by it endeavoured to run the orthodox upon the contradiction of three *ousias*, or essences in the Trinity: so that when it is said of these eighty prelates, that they rejected the term *homoousios*, *consubstantial*, we are to understand nothing more, than that they rejected it so far only as *Samosatenus* had abused and perverted it; since it is plain, that, in other words, they retained that very sense of the Trinity, which, by the decree of the *Nicene* council, this term was intended to convey. For in their second synodical epistle, written in regard to this arch-heretic, we find the following words—*Qui*

¹ *Dionysii Alex. Epist. in Athanas, v. i. p. 919.*

autem dicit, confiteri filium Dei esse Deum, non esse aliud quam Duos Deos prædicare, hunc alienum esse ab ecclesiasticâ regulâ arbitramur ².

Whosoever shall say, that to confess the Son of God to be very God, is the same with preaching up two distinct Gods, (as the said Paul did affirm) such an one we esteem to have departed from the established doctrine of the church.

Now to affirm, as they here do, that the Father and the Son are not *two Gods*, is to affirm that they are *one*. But this unity must be either an unity of essence, or an unity of person: an unity of person it cannot be; therefore it is an unity of essence. And what is this, but the very sense of *homoousios*? wherefore, Mr. *Chillingworth* (if the letter be really his) hath certainly misrepresented these Fathers; it being manifest, that they and the Bishops of the *Nicene* council, were of one and the same opinion; though, as occasion required, they may have expressed themselves differently, having two opposite errors to combat: *Paul*, whose heresy was like that of *Sabellius*, would have reduced the whole Trinity to *one Person*, while the *Arians* were for dividing the Unity into *three Gods*.

² Cited by *Petavius*, Præf. ad Lib. de Trin. ch. ii. § 1.

But

But in the conclusion of this letter, he in a manner leaves the *Arians* in possession of the field, and that for a very singular reason.—

“ Whosoever (says he) shall freely and impartially consider of this thing, and how, on the other side, the ancient Fathers weapons against the *Arians* are in a manner only places of Scripture, and those now for the most part discarded as impertinent and unconcluding—he shall not chuse but confess, or at least be very inclinable to believe, that the doctrine of *Arius* is either a truth, or at least no damnable heresy.”

And what *weapons* would Mr. *Chillingworth* have had them use? There can be none so proper, as *the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God*; by which we shall be judged at last, and consequently ought now to be directed. It was the very weapon *Christ* himself made use of against the devil: and though the *Arians* and *Socinians* have done their utmost to turn the edge of it, it is still sharper than the wooden dagger of human wisdom, and will always be found so when it is put to the trial. I cannot, therefore, be so *free* and *impartial*, as to conclude with myself, that the doctrine of *Arius* was no damnable heresy, purely because the weapons of the Fathers

against

against his followers, were in a manner *only* places of Scripture. Whether they are, as he calls them, *impertinent* and *unconcluding*, is another question ; with which, as this learned man hath not been pleased to mention any of them, we have at present no concern. Upon the whole, the scepticism of this Epistle agrees but too well with the character given of Mr. *Chillingworth* by the earl of *Clarendon*, who knew him intimately, and being strongly possessed in his favour, cannot be suspected either of ignorance or malice in his report of him. “ He had spent all his younger time “ in disputation ; and had arrived to so great “ a mastery, that he was inferior to no man “ in those skirmishes ; but he had, with his “ notable perfection in this exercise, contracted such an irresolution and habit of “ doubting, that by degrees he grew confident of nothing, and a sceptic at least, in “ the greatest mysteries of faith *.” If this was the case, the private correspondence of Mr. *Chillingworth* is of very little authority.

We next proceed to Dr. *Cudworth* : and as for him, the *author* tells us, that “ he does “ not only give up the Primitive Fathers in

* *Clarendon's Life*, p. 293

“ their

“ their expressions, but also in their meaning.” Of which, and of the quotation made from the said *doctor*, I shall take no farther notice, than just to subjoin a little short hint, from a scarce and incomparable work of the learned Dr. *Turner* upon mythology, in which we meet with the following stricture upon the discerning Dr. *Cudworth*—
 “ But I wonder how it came to pass, that the
 “ learned writer of the Intellectual System,
 “ who seems at every turn to be so extravagantly fond of a Trinity (notwithstanding,
 “ as I have proved elsewhere, he hath made
 “ it his business to undermine and overthrow
 “ it) should be able to make it out so fully,
 “ that the *Greeks* and *Romans* had a Trinity,
 “ though *he himself hath none* *.”

The third divine, who has *plainly given up this point*, and allowed that *Arianism* hath the testimony of all the ancient Fathers, is Bishop *Bull*; even that same Bishop *Bull*, who hath reconciled the Fathers of the three first centuries with the *Nicene* faith; and un-

* *Essay*, p. 120.

* *Notes on Mythol.*—I cannot refer to the page, because this book was designed only as a preface to a larger work, and is unpagged.

dertook this work, because it was the vain boast of the *Arian* party, (as still it is, for they are never to be silenced) that the most ancient Fathers of the church were the original advocates and propagaters of their heresy.

From this very work it is, that the author extracts a passage, wherein it is confessed, that “almost all the Fathers, who lived before “the council of *Nice*, in their manner of “explaining the article of the sacred Trinity, “sometimes speak otherwise than the *Catholics* do².” But this concession can be of no advantage; because it hath been the attempt of this most learned man to prove, by a complete induction of particulars, that although the *Ante-Nicene* and *Catholic* Fathers do sometimes differ in their words and expressions, they agree nevertheless in *sense* and *doctrine*: and the learned Bishop succeeded so well in the attempt as to gain universal reputation both with Englishmen and foreigners: though it is certain, that no present success can secure a man from the future misrepresentations of his adversaries; especially if they should happen to be of the *mendacissimum*

² *Ess.* p. 119, 120. *Def. Fid. Nic.* Sect. 11. c. 9. § 22.

genus hominum ; a character, which the afore-
said Bishop, for their notorious and repeated
forgeries, thought proper to bestow upon the
Arians.

Before we finish upon this head, it will not
be amiss to recollect, that the *author* in his
title-page promised an *inquiry into the senti-
ments of the Primitive Fathers of the church*.
And what does he think an *inquiry* to be? Is
it something, in which a man never *inquires*
at all? for instead of turning to any pertinent
expressions in the writings of the Fathers, and
obliging his readers with a fair and regular
disquisition of them, he rather chuses to bor-
row a second-hand opinion from those, who
for different reasons have turned to them, and
made different reports concerning them : hav-
ing done this, he treats us with an imperfect
account of their answers. One says, that the
doctrine of *Arius* is no damnable heresy, be-
cause the weapons of the Fathers, on the con-
trary side, were *nothing but places of Scripture*
—another, that he discards even the *very*
meaning of the Primitive Fathers—and a third,
has written a *folio* to prove the *very* contrary
to what he would make him affirm. And
this he is pleased to call (by way of banter to
be sure) an *inquiry* into the sentiments of the
Primitive

Primitive Fathers ; when, as far as they are concerned, he seems only just to have *inquired* what their *names* were, and then makes a rattle with *Athenagoras*, *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, &c.

CHAP. VII.

His Misapplication of the Heathen Trinities.

THIS part of his work is entitled, an *Inquiry* into the doctrine of the Trinity, as maintained by the *Egyptians*, *Pythagoreans*, and *Platonists*. His design in making this enquiry, is to point out a subordination of power in the persons of the *Trinity* ; that this doctrine, as maintained by the Heathens before the coming of Christ, may confirm his own notion of the *sacred* Trinity. And he is pleased to conjecture, or rather to affirm for truth, that the reason why the *Platonists*, &c. were so ready to embrace the *Christian* religion, was, the close resemblance between the *Pagan* Trinity in general, or the *Platonic* in particular, and the Trinity as maintained in its pure and genuine sense (with a professed subordination of power in it) by the Primitive
Chris-

Christians^a. All of which is *gratis dictum* : for in the first place, it is clear, that the Primitive *Christians*, where they write like themselves, do not allow a subordination of power; and in this he mistakes the *Arians* for the *Christians*, since it is the original *Arian* Trinity, and not the *Christian*^b, that supposes such an inferiority in the persons of the Godhead. It is likewise clear, that the resemblance between the *Platonic* and the *Christian* Trinity, as sometimes loosely commented upon by the early writers of the church, be it more or less, did not proceed from any natural affinity between them, but from that strange leaven of false philosophy, with which several of the Fathers corrupted the purity of the *Christian* system.

But, to come nearer to the point, we must insist upon it, that our author should *inquire*, what the Pagans originally *meant* by their Trinities, and endeavour to explain, before he applies; for to inquire *after* them, and inquire *into* them, are two very different things: the former any body may do; the latter is attended with some labour and difficulty. And unless he can be sure, that the *Pagans*, when they

^a P. 122, 123.

Athan. Ep. ad Afr. Episc.

^b Μαλλον Αρειανοι η Χριστιανοι.

profess

profess a *Trinity*, mean the very same with that of the Old and New Testament, they cannot be permitted to have any share in the controversy.

The inquiry is opened with the *Egyptian Trinity*, as delivered by *Jamblichus*; and yet our author does not attempt to give any satisfactory reasons for producing it, but confesses that he cannot translate it. It is *abstruse, dark, and super-intelligible*; and he leaves the translation of it to the “*deistical*” “*admirers*” of the religion of nature^c. A mighty odd way this: first to put the *Heathen Trinity* upon a level with the *Christian*, then draw it up in battle array, and sound a trumpet before it, as if it were capable of great achievements against the doctrine he is at war with; and then, on a sudden, to turn short, and ridicule its contemptible obscurity! This *Egyptian Trinity* I shall transcribe, as the *author* gives it^e; and, with humble sub-

^c P. 125.

^d The principles of which religion are so much admired by the author himself, that he has received them as the most effectual test of the scriptural Trinity. For the beginning of his title page runs thus—*An Essay on Spirit, in which the Doctrine of the Trinity is considered in the Light of NATURE and REASON.*

^e P. 123, 124.

mission, try my hand at a literal *English* translation of it : and though it is one of the dark recesses of Paganism, which cannot be properly searched into without much diligence and attention, more than at present I have either leisure or inclination to bestow upon it, yet I shall beg leave to offer, as they occur to me, a few hints toward an explanation of it, and readily submit them to better judgments for improvement and correction.

Προ των ούτως ούτων, και των όλων αρχων εσι Θεοις, πρωτοι και τε πρωτοι Θεοι και βασιλεις, ακινητοι εν μονοτητι της εαυτε ενοτητι μενων, ετε γαρ νοητον αυτω επιπλεκεται, ετε αλλο τι. Παραδειγμα δε ιδρυται τε αυτε πατρι, αυτογονε, και μονοπατορ Θεο, τε ούτως αγαθε. Μειζον γαρ τι και πρωτον, και πηγη των παύλων, και πυθμην των νοημενων πρωτων ειδων οντων. Απο δε τε εν τω τω, ο αυταρχης Θεος εαυτον εξελαμψε· διο και αυτοπατωρ, και αυταρχης. Αρχη γαρ αυτος και Θεος Θεων. Μονας εκ τε εν, προ υσιας, και αρχη της υσιας· απ' αυτε γαρ η υσιότης και η υσια· διο γαρ νοηταρχης προσαγορευεται. Αυτοι μεν εν εισιν αρχαι πρεσβυταται παντων, ας Ερμης προ των αιθεριων και εμπυριων θεων προσατλει, και των επερανιων.

“ Before all things which really ARE, and
 “ before the beginning of all beings, there is
 VOL. II. P “ one

“ one God, prior to the first God and king,
 “ remaining immoveable in the solitude of
 “ his unity; for neither intellectuality, nor
 “ any thing else, is intermixed with him.
 “ He is the exemplar of himself the Father,
 “ the self-begotten God, the only Father,
 “ and the truly-good. For he is the greatest
 “ and the first, the fountain of all things,
 “ and the root of all primary existent forms.
 “ But from this one, the self-sufficient God
 “ shone himself out; for which reason, he is
 “ self-generated and self-sufficient; for he is
 “ the beginning, and the God of Gods; he
 “ is unity produced from one; he is before
 “ all essence, and is himself the beginning of
 “ essence; because, from him are entity and
 “ essence: wherefore he is called the prince
 “ of intelligence. These, therefore, are the
 “ most ancient principles of all things, under
 “ which, in the third and inferior class, *Her-*
 “ *mes* ranks the etherial, empyreal, and cele-
 “stial deities.”

This, to be sure, if I have been a faithful
 interpreter, is most infernal jargon; but if the
Egyptian sages, who drew it up, intended
 there should be any sense in it, we shall not
 be likely to discover this sense, by coming
 prepossessed with *christian* (or, in effect, *un-*
christian)

christian) prejudices, and vainly imagining that Heathens, who *knew not God*, must have been prepossessed with the same notions : for it is a plain and serviceable rule in interpreting any author, not to bring his sense to him, and father an intention upon him which he never dreamt of; but to take it from his own words, and support it by a comparison with the sentiments of those that professed the same doctrines.

It will also be allowed as indisputable, that the Heathens themselves best knew what was intended by their own *super-intelligible* mysteries : for which reason, I dare not attempt the short inquiry I have proposed, without taking *Macrobius*, who, as far as I am able to judge, was the most learned of them all, for my guide and director; and then, though the mist is very thick, I have courage enough to hope, that we shall not quite be lost in it. He tells us, that if we would understand the Heathen theology, we must take with us the following admonition—*Cave æstimes, mi Aviene, poetarum gregem cum de diis fabulantur, non ab adytis plerunque philosophiæ semina mutuari*^f.
 “ When the poets relate their mysterious fa-

^f *Saturn.* lib. i. c. 17.

bles about the gods, take it generally for granted, that the subject-matter of these mysteries is borrowed from the depths of natural philosophy." This rule *Macrobius* hath made an excellent use of, in unfolding the mysteries of the *Egyptians*, *Pythagoreans*, and *Platonists*; and if it holds good, it must put us upon searching, not for a spiritual or intellectual, but for a physical Trinity, in that precious stuff I have just now translated. The same direction is given us by *Phurnutus*, in his treatise concerning the *Nature of the Gods*. "Be assured of this, (says he) that the ancients were no ideots, but able to understand the nature of the world, and very happy in their method of philosophising by symbols and fables *."

In pursuance, therefore, of this plan, we will lay it down, that the first God herein mentioned, is the *chaos*, or *first matter*; that the second is *light*, or the *sun*; and the third the *soul of the world*, or vivifying spirit diffused from the sun through the whole system of beings, from the stars and planets, down to men, animals, and plants; and I must beg

* Πισθεὶς ὅτι οὐχ οἱ τυχαῖοις ἔγνωτο οἱ παλαιοί, ἀλλὰ καὶ συνίηαι τῶν τε κόσμου φύσιν ἱκανοί, καὶ πρὸς τοῦ δια συμβόλων καὶ αἰνιγματῶν φιλοσοφῆσαι περὶ αὐτῆς εὐπιφοροί. Edit. Gale, p. 105.

the reader candidly to suspend his judgment till I have run through the whole.

To proceed then,

Before all things which really are, and before the beginning of all beings, there is one God, prior to the first God and King.

This, as I have already observed, is the chaos, or *first matter*, as it subsisted in a boundless uncreated mass from all eternity, till the *melior natura*², its own intellectual efficacy, brought it into order; or, as *Sancho-niatho* expresses it, till the *dark air of the chaos fell in love with its own principles*, and caused that mixture, from which all the Gods were generated³. This same deity, made of right superintelligible, is sometimes called *incomprehensible darkness*, as by *Damascius*—*Μία των όλων αρχη σκοτεινή αγνωστον*⁴, *The only principle of all things, is incomprehensible darkness*; and the *Babylonians*, as the same writer informs us, while they expressed divine wor-

² *Ovid. Met. lib. i. l. 17.*

³ *Ἡ εἰσθη το πνευμα των ιδιων αρχων, και ἰγνίλο συγκρησις, &c. Euseb. Præp. Evan. lib. i. cap. 10.*

⁴ All I mention of *Damascius*, is taken from a manuscript fragment, referred to by the learned Bishop *Cumberland*, in his Remarks upon the History of *Sancho-niatho*. See p. 280, &c.

ship to the other Gods, adored this first and super-existent God, by *passing him over in silence*^k. In the *Orphic* hymns, *Night* is said to be *the begetter of Gods and men*^l: at other times the Heathens call this same deity, *Proteus*; which, according to the origination of his name (Πρωτεύς) is the *first* God, or *first matter*, which originally subsisted under no form, but was capable of assuming any, according to the infinitely various modifications of matter; and hence the poets, agreeable to their custom of borrowing from the *adyta philosophiæ*, tell us so much of his tricks and transformations. That this *Proteus*, or the *first matter* of the *chaos*, is the very same with that Deity, which is here styled *the one God*, prior to *the first God and King*, must, I apprehend, be evident from a fragment of *Epicharmus*, the most ancient of all the comic poets, wherein it is affirmed, that the *Chaos* is the *first* of all the Gods—Χαὸς ΠΡΩΤΟΣ τῶν Θεῶν; nor is it possible there should be any sense in the phrase or, a *πρῶτος ἐκ πρώτων*, a *prior primo*, a God *before the first*; unless by the first *πρῶτος*, we understand, the self-existent mat-

^k Μίαν τῶν ὅλων ἀρχὴν σιγῇ παρίηκεν. See also *Plato de Rep.* l. vi. p. 686.

^l Νυκτὶ θεοὶ γινέσθαι αἰσισομαι, ἡδὲ καὶ ἀνδρῶν.

ter of the *chaos* ; by the second the *light* or *sun*, the first and greatest ruler of the world, who was formed out of it.

It is farther said of him, that he “ *remains immoveable in the solitude of his unity.*” He filled the boundless extent of space^m, had no room left to move into, and therefore was in a motionless state of universal stability, since it was impossible that he should change places with himself. But he is in another sense more properly called *immoveable unity*, that is, because out of this first matter all formed substances are derived ; and while they (the forms) undergo the perpetual vicissitudes of generation and corruption, (or dissolution) that first matter out of which they are framed, still keeps ready to its principles, and remains unalterable.

Omnia mortali mutantur lege Creati

*At manet incolumis MUNDUS suaque omnia
servat ;*

Quæ nec longa dies auget, minuitve senectus :

Nec motus puncto currit, cursusque fatigat.

^m Thus *Sanchoniatho* affirms, that the dark air, and turbid matter of the chaos, was for a long time infinite, and had no bounds—*ταῦτα δὲ εἶναι ἀπείρα καὶ διὰ πολλὴν αἰωνὰ μὴ ἔχειν πέρας. Ibid.*

IDEM semper erit, quoniam semper fuit

IDEM ;

Non alium videre patres, aliumve minores

Aspicient ; DEUS est, qui non mutatur in ævum.

Manil. Astron. l. i. v. 515.

The *unity*, immutability, and divinity of this first matter, is a point of very high antiquity ; for it was a principle of *Linus*, that *of the one whole are all things, and all that all things constitute the one whole*^a, which is the first and incomprehensible God : and *Diogenes Laertius* affirms the same of *Musæus*, who maintained, like all the rest, that *all things are made of ONE*, (the homogeneous and eternal matter of the universe) *and that into this ONE, they are again all resolved*^b. And thus also *Plato*, describing the universe, as consisting of first matter, diversified into all the

^a Εκ παλῆς δὲ τα πάντα, καὶ ἐκ πάντων τὸ πάλιν ἐστίν. *Stob. Eclog. Physic.*

^b Εξ ἑνὸς τα πάντα γίνεσθαι, καὶ εἰς ταῦτα αἰαλίσθαι. *Diog. Laer. in præm. S. 3.* This capital article of the Egyptian physico-theology was expressed hieroglyphically by the figure of a serpent, in an orbicular posture, with its tail in its mouth ; by which, as *Pierius* observes, they meant to signify, *mundum ex seipso ali, et in se revolvī.* *Hierogl. l. 14. p. 102. E.*

visible

visible species, says, that *the whole is ONE and MANY*^P: which agrees with the doctrine of *Ocellus Lucanus*, a philosopher more ancient than *Aristotle*, whose whole design it is to shew, that the world is *divine*, that it always existed, and shall always continue; being subject to no change but a perpetual transformation, which he thus describes—Το δὲ ἐξ ἀμφοτέρων αὐτῶν, τὸ μὲν αἰεὶ θεοῦ ὅς τις, τὸ δὲ αἰεὶ μεταβαλλοῦν γεννῆς, κόσμος ἀρα ἐστὶν *. “ The
 “ world is composed of these two things, a
 “ divine matter which is ever growing up or
 “ flowing into the forms, and another matter
 “ so begotten, which is ever changing from
 “ one form to another.”

It is added, moreover, that *neither intellectuality, nor any thing else, is intermixed with him*: that *he is the exemplar of himself, the Father, the self-begotten God, the only Father, and the truly-good*. From all of which, I can understand nothing more, than that matter was self-originated from all eternity without a Creator: whatever else may be intended by it, is abundantly too deep for my capacity. But when it is said, that “ *he is the greatest and the first, the FOUNTAIN of all things,*

^P Πάν τις αὖτε καὶ πολλὰ. Plat. in Parmen.

* Ocell. Luc. cap. ii. ad fin.

“ and

“ *and the root of all primary existent FORMS;*” here, I presume, we have a clear proof, that this first God is nothing more than the formless and universal mass of matter, out of which the *forms* are derived, as from their fountain, and from whence they shoot forth, as the stem, branches, and leaves of a tree do from its root. In which very manner, *Jupiter*, as understood to be the one universal God, comprehending all other deities comprehensible and incomprehensible in himself, is described by *Orpheus*.

Ζεὺς πρῶτος γενετο, Ζεὺς ὑστατος ἀρχικεραυνος,
 Ζεὺς κεφαλῇ, Ζεὺς μεσσα, Διὸς δ' ἐκ παντὰ τετοχται,
 Ζεὺς ΠΥΘΜΗΝ γαίης, τε καὶ ἔρανος ἀσπεροεντος.

Arist. de mundo.

Jupiter is the first and the last, the head, and the midst; OUT OF him all things are fabricated: he is the root of earth, and of the starry heaven. By which it is meant, as I humbly conjecture, that he is the *first*, as having existed in a dark and incomprehensible state, prior to that of the *forms*; the *middle*, as subsisting *under* the forms; and the *last*, as resolved, in the continued round of generation and corruption, into his own first principles

principles again. Much more might be said of this dark first cause; but we will pass on to the second person of this Trinity, whose origin from the first is set forth in the following terms. *But from this ONE, the self-sufficient God shone himself out; for which reason, he is self-generated and self-sufficient.* The *light*, which is the second God here spoken of, did, according to the Heathen creed, extricate itself by its own power from the bands of original darkness, and arose from the confused mass of earthy, airy, and watery matter. For it is affirmed by *Hesiod* in his *Theogony*, that *Chaos*, the first incomprehensible darkness, begat *Night and Erebus*; that is, the *chaos* turned itself into a male and female power, a sort of *hermaphrodite*, and then begat *æther* or *day-light*^a: who is else where called *Ερως*, *Love* or *Cupid*, which sprang forth with golden wings from the *chaos*, and hatched it. The *Egyptians* worshipped this same God under the name of *Cneph*^r, and asserted

^a Ητοι μὲν ΠΡΩΤΙΣΤΑ ΧΑΟΣ γαιετ'—

Εκ Χαιετ' δ' Ερεβ' τι μελαινα τε Νυξ ἰγανονιο,

Νυκτ' δ' αὐτ' Αἰθηρ τε καὶ Ἡμερη ἐξηγαγοντο,

Οὓς τιτε κυσσαμενη, Ερεβ' φιλοειρεν μινγεσσα.

Theog. l. 116, &c.

^r Which is the *Hebrew* word חנן *CaNePH*, a *wing*, and by this name they meant to imitate the swiftness of the
light

asserted him to be *without beginning and without end*^a; and yet *Damascius* confesses, that *Asclepiades* makes his *Egyptian Cneph*, or *Cmephis*, to be begotten out of *sand and water*, the muddy mixture of the *chaos*; from which it must be altogether clear, that this God, though without beginning and without end, could yet be no *spiritual* principle^b; and if not a spiritual, then a *natural* or *physical* principle, which is the very thing I am contending for.

“*He is the beginning, and the God of Gods*,” [which *Cicero* expresses, by calling the sun, the—*dux et moderator luminum reliquorum*”]. “*Unity produced from one: he was before all essence, and is himself the beginning of essence; for from him are entity and essence.*”] What the EN or ONE is, we have seen already; as for this *μονας*, or *unity*, which arose from him, *Macrobius* says of it, (just as it was said of *Cneph*) that it is *without beginning and without end*. He also affirms, that it is the *mind begotten of the first cause*; which *mind*, as we learn from

light in its progress from the sun, and accordingly they made images of this God, painted of different colours, and *winged*. See *Macrob. Saturn. lib. i. ch. 19.* ^a *Plut. de Is. & Osir.*

^b See *Cumberland's Remarks*, p. 13, 281.

^c *Sonn. Scip.*

another

another part of his writings, was nothing else but the *sun*^w. And this is still farther confirmed, because the *Assyrians* adored the *sun*, under the very name of *unity*; they called him *Adad*, which is plainly a corruption of the *Hebrew* אַחַד *ACHAD*, and *Macrobius* so explains it; for, says he, *ejus nominis interpretatio, est UNUS*^x.

How he could be *before all essence*, and be himself the *beginning of essence*, may, I think, be understood by the help of an ancient *Scholion* upon a verse of *Hesiod*, which supplies us with a very clear distinction between *first matter* and *essence*; according to which, *υλη*, *first matter*, is to be considered as an unwrought mass of metal; *ουσια*, *essence*, as the same mass hammered into form and figure^y. Therefore, the *sun*, as his substance from all eternity made a part of the formless *chaos*, was *before essence*; as receiving a form and figure, upon his self-generation from it, he is the *first essence*, properly so called. The reason why it is added, that *from him are entity and essence*, is plainly this: the Heathens esteemed

^w In *Somn. Scip.* lib. i. cap. 6. cap. 20.

^x *Sat.* lib. i. c. 23.

^y Ἡ γὰρ μὲν ἐστὶν ὁ χαλκός, οὐσία δὲ ἡ διὰ τὴν πρῶτον τοῦ χαλκοῦ.
See *Dan. Heinsius's* Edit. p. 239. b.

the light or power of the sun, to be the sole efficient cause in the formation of all the substances in nature: the matter of them they supposed to have been as eternal as himself; but their growth, form, and figure, proceed entirely from his agency: and the *essence* of any thing (as we have already seen) is constituted by its figuration. As intelligence likewise, according to their philosophy, arises from the form or structure of any particular body, and as this structure is owing to the operation of the sun's power, therefore he is (as also for other reasons.²) dignified with the attribute of *νοταρχης*, the "*prince of intelligence*."—

Thus much for the first and second persons of this *Egyptian* Trinity: as for the third degree of power, it is supported by the whole tribe of *etherial*, *empyreal*, and *celestial* Gods, amounting to nothing more than the *dæmons*, or divine minds, which animate the stars and planets, and people the wide extent of the airy regions; that is, in short, the *intelligent æther* * itself, expanded from the sun's orb, to the extremities of the system.

² See what I cited at p. 93. from the book *De Diæta*.

* Δια το τοι αιδερα το ηγεμονικοι ειηαι τε κοσμη, ο δε λογικοι εση
Phurnut. De N. D. p. 69.

As *Egypt* was the grand academy of Paganism, and the other Trinities, the *Pythagorean* and *Platonic*, were in all probability borrowed from that we have already considered, it should seem needless to take any particular notice of them; but as the tracing of this affinity may serve to confirm what hath already been said, I shall spend a few words upon each of them.

The first of the two is given by *Simplicius*, in his comment upon *Aristotle*, out of *Modetratus* the *Pythagorean*, and stands thus^a:—

Το μὲν πρῶτον ἐν ὑπὲρ τὸ οὐ καὶ πᾶσαν ἔστιν ἀποφαινεται· τὸ δὲ δεύτερον ἐν ὅπερ ἐστὶ τὸ οὐτως οὐ, καὶ νοητὸν, τὰ εἶδη φησὶν εἶναι· τὸ δὲ τρίτον, ὅπερ ἐστὶ ψυχικόν, μετεχειν τὴ ἐνθὺ καὶ τῶν εἰδῶν. *The first one he (i. e. Pythagoras) declares to be above being and essence: the second one, which is existence and intelligence, he says, is THE FORMS: and that the third one, which is animal, partakes of the first one, and of the forms.*

Nothing, in my humble opinion, can (in so small a compass) more completely explain the *Hermetic* Trinity, in the very sense I have understood it, than this does. Here is a

^a Ess. p. 125. Simpl. in Phys. Arist. fol. 50.

πρῶτον ἐν, a *first one*, declared superior to all being and *essence*; because, as it hath been remarked above, *being* or *essence* arises from *form*, and first matter is *without form*. For the same reason, the *second one* is called *essence* and *intelligence*; and the very name of, *the forms*, is here applied to him, which surely must put the matter out of dispute. From our author's account of this *second God*, it must evidently appear, that he was either unable, or unwilling to understand what he was about. The original is—Τὸ δεύτερον ἐν, ὅπερ ἐστὶ τὸ ὄντως ὄν, καὶ νοητὸν, τὰ εἶδη φησὶν εἶναι— which he thus translates—“ The second one, “ who is existence itself, and intelligence, is “ called IDEA ^b.” Τὰ εἶδη, THE FORMS, in the *plural*, is according to him, IDEA (an image) in the *singular*! which, if compared with the language and the intent of the original, is neither sense nor grammar. He was, perhaps, under some private apprehensions, that if he left this multiform Deity in possession of the second place in this *Pythagorean Trinity*, all would be spoiled; because no man could be so absurd as to suspect a parallel between a God who is infinitely many, and the

^b P. 126. He is pleased once more to deliver this interpretation at p. 131.

second person of the sacred Trinity, who is only one.

As for the *τρίτον εν*, or *third one*, it does not exactly answer in expression to the *etherial Gods* above-mentioned, but in sense amounts to the same. It is the *soul of the world*, the *animal spirit*, that bestows life, sense, and motion, upon all rational, animal, and vegetable beings: and what this is, we have already seen from many authorities (to which ten times as many more might soon be added) in the first chapter.

The last in order is the *Platonic Trinity*, which, instead of being more refined than the rest, as, according to the extravagant opinion some men have conceived of *Plato*, it ought to be, rather seems to confirm the whole, and may, therefore, reasonably encourage us to suppose, that we have hit upon the true explanation of them all. *Plato*, says the author, “ in that treatise which he entitles *Timæus*, “ is the most copious on this head, and “ therein he speaks plainly of ‘ one sempiternal and unoriginated God ; which God, “ says *Plato*, when he reasoned within himself about a future God, made this uni-

‘ Τὸ αὐτὸ, γένεσις δὲ οὐκ ἔχει

“ verse, and placed this perfectly happy God
 “ which he begat, as the *soul in the middle of*
 “ *it*.” The words *sempiternal* and *unorigi-*
nated have a pompous sound ; but as we are
 certain that these philosophers dignified the
 first matter of the universe with these attri-
 butes, they are nothing but mere sounds with-
 out either sense or meaning ; for whatever
 noise they make with the attributes of *eter-*
nity, wisdom, goodness, perfection, and the
 like ; yet, if they bestowed these high appella-
 tions upon a wrong object, upon that which
by nature is not God, the most subtile reason-
 ings in the world cannot clear them from the
 odious imputation of having dishonoured that
 God, whom we are told, *they did not like to*
*retain in their knowledge**. All that can be
 done (or at least all that I have seen) upon
 this occasion, is to presume that the wise hea-
 thens could not be so *absurd* as to overlook
 the power of a Creator, and ascribe divine in-
 telligence to the dead elements of the world.
 But this can amount to little or nothing ; be-
 cause, whether they were so absurd or not, is
 the very question in dispute, and nothing but
 their own expressions, compared with the cha-

* P. 127.

* Rom. i. 28.

racter they bear in the sacred writings, ought to decide it.

But let us descend to a closer examination of *Plato's* words. This *sempiternal* and *un-originated* God, it seems, when he *reasoned within himself about a future God, made this universe*. The formation of the universe, therefore, was necessary to the existence of this *future God*. If to this his residence be added, it must, I apprehend, at once dispel all farther doubts and difficulties. For when he was begotten, he was placed in this universe, as the *soul in the middle* of it. Now what is it that is placed in the *middle* of the universe, but the *light* in the orb of the *sun*, the first and chief of all the *forms* that emerged from the obscurity of primæval darkness? This is the soul *Plato* speaks of, and accordingly it is confessed by *Heraiscus* in *Damascius*, that the *sun*, here called the *soul in the middle*, is the *νοῦς*, the *intelligent mind* of the world^f. So that this *perfectly happy God* is, after all, nothing greater than the *Egyptian Cneph*, begotten out of sand and water. This is sufficient to give us a surfeit of *Plato's* Trinity, and, therefore, any farther account

^f Bp. Cumb. *Ibid.* p. 282.

of it would be superfluous. But the *Essay-writer* thinks it “ more for his purpose” to take this Trinity as delivered by *Porphyry*, “ who flourished about the time when the “ *consubstantial* doctrine of the Trinity began “ (as he calls it) to *make a noise* “ :” Which observation, though improperly worded, is yet in the main true enough ; so true, that it will at once overturn all he has attempted to build upon it. This *Porphyry* was an apostate from the *Christian* to the *Heathen* religion, and opposed the gospel with the most implacable bitterness, even to a degree of madness : this principle encouraged him to draw up the opinion of *Plato* in the very terms made use of by the primitive Fathers to express the doctrine of the *sacred Trinity* ; and in so doing his intent was, impudently to confront the *Christians* with this contemptible scrap of Paganism, dressed up in their own expressions. The words of *Porphyry* are these—
 Ἀχρη γὰρ τριῶν υποστάσεων, εἶη Πλάτων, τὴν τῷ Θεῷ
 προελθὲν ἑσσαν, &c. “ *Plato said, that the*
 “ *essence of God is distinguished into three*
 “ *Hypostases,*” &c. *Plato* never said any such thing ; he never thought of defining his

confused triplicity by the terms *αἰα* and *υπεραία* properly applied and distinguished: and when ornamented with this garb, it makes, I think, a much worse appearance than it did before. So that *Porphyry*, by his sense of the *Platonic* Trinity, instead of betraying the weakness of the consubstantial doctrine, betrays nothing but his own want of judgment. He has borrowed the most distinguished terms from the Christians of his time, and by an injudicious application of them, made that Trinity a consubstantial one, which, according to its original and genuine acceptation, was never designed as such.

Upon the whole then, there will be no danger in granting, that “ it is manifest (as “ our author asserts) beyond all controversy, “ that both *Plato* and his disciples held a “ kind of essential subordination to have existed between these Gods^a ;” for the argument drawn from a comparison between an heathen and the scriptural Trinity is so inconsequential, that if he had instanced a subordination in fifty more Trinities of the like nature, it would not in the least affect the sense of this doctrine as maintained by believers.

^a P. 132.

I shall, therefore, pursue this subject no farther, and ought to beg the reader's pardon, for dwelling so long upon so dry a subject; but as it was pressed into the service of heterodoxy, I thought it could not be amiss to set this matter in that light, in which the Pagans themselves appear to have seen it. Some modern critics, by putting a more sublime sense upon these things, have contradicted the original design of them, and displayed their own ignorance in a very pompous manner: they have exalted the prophane absurdities of heathenism, while they have made no scruple of depreciating the mysteries of true religion. They have been so hardy as to apprehend, without the least ceremony, that when the ancient philosophers speak of their Gods and Dæmons, they must mean the same as a believer does by the true God, and the host of angels. This is a fact too well known to need any particular proof; but, however, I shall produce one instance of it from the great *Bochart*, which, as this learned man was not less skilled in sacred than in prophane knowledge, is so much the more remarkable, and may serve to teach us, that before we venture to assert an agreement between the Bible and the heathen cosmogonies in any article of moment,

moment, some caution is absolutely necessary.

Sanckoniatho, in his cosmogony, after he has asserted his first dark principle of the universe, and a second God begotten of him by a self-concupiscence, sets down, in the third order, a sort of dæmons, or intelligent animals, which he calls *Zophesemin*, spies or inspectors of the heavens, each of them formed in the shape of an egg, and generated from mud¹; which *Zophesemin* are supposed by *Bochart*, to mean the celestial angels, the intelligent and real inhabitants of the invisible heavens. A criticism so evidently absurd and contrary to truth, that I shall not undertake to disprove it; and the rather, because it is taken proper notice of by the learned bishop *Cumberland**.

This

¹ Euseb. Præp. Evan. lib. i. c. 10.

* The learned *Bochart* hath rightly given the original of the name *Zophesemin* from the Hebrew צופים, signifying speculators, or observers, and שמים, heaven; but he does violence to the author's whole text and scope; besides that he opposes *Eusebius's* just reflection upon him, as not propounding the inhabitants of heaven, i. e. the angels, for Deities, when he interprets these *Zophesemin* to be angels. For how should angels be bred, as these are said to be, out of mud? How, when angels are so generated, shall the sun, moon, and stars, shine out? how shall angels be shaped like

This unaccountable fancy of searching for sacred truth amongst the writings of professed idolaters, hath had too many and too able advocates both ancient and modern; and though we ought not to suspect, that in all cases it proceeds from a very bad principle, yet can it seldom or never be referred to a very good one; and the attempt must be in general fruitless and unsatisfactory: for though it be granted, that upon the rise and progress of idolatry after the flood, the most ancient Heathens carried off many sublime mysteries of the true religion, and purloined more in after ages from the people of God; yet when they were in possession of them, they mixed them up with their own atheistical principles, then strained away the purer part of the mixture, and let it run to waste: so that if we now seek it again from them, there is little to be found but their own filthy sediments instead of it. And if in scattered fragments, borrowed from the *Hebrews*, there should be

an egg, or in a roundish form? The truth is, his mind was prepossessed with Christian notions, and he vainly imagined that an Heathen must be so too. But *Sanctioniatho* meant only, that the celestial bodies are *intelligent*, and see what is done here below; and, therefore, were to be adored as Gods, *Remarks upon the History of Sanch,* p. 21,

found

found some dark notices of the true God, yet, after all, we are not to form our sentiments from the Heathen theology, but to reform and correct that by the Christian.

CHAP. VIII.

His Remarks upon the Athanasian and Nicene Creeds obviated.

THE intent of the Essay-writer in these remarks is, to point out a few contradictions both in the language and in the sense of these two Creeds, when compared either with themselves, or with each other. But, I fear, that whatever contradictions we shall meet with, they will at last prove to be nothing but the genuine produce of his own imagination. I will try the experiment, by setting down these remarks separately, and subjoining a reply to each of them.

Remark I. “ The doctrine of *three Hypostases*, was not the doctrine of the council of *Nice*, but was afterwards adopted by some of the *Consubstantialists*, and was inserted in that Creed which goes under the name of *Athanasius*; but which could not
“ possibly

“ possibly have been written by him, because
 “ he, as well as the rest of the *Nicene* Fathers,
 “ insisted upon it, that there was but *one*
 “ *Hypostasis* in the Trinity, any more than
 “ one *Usia*¹.”

His reason then for affirming that the Creed which goes under the name of *Athanasius*, could not *possibly* have been written by him, is, because he *insisted upon it*, that there was but *one Hypostasis* in the Trinity, any more than one *Usia*. This cannot possibly be true, because on the contrary *Athanasius insisted upon it*, that in the Trinity there is one *Usia* and *three Hypostases*: as a proof of which, the following instances will be esteemed sufficient. In his *Questions* *, we find these two, with their respective answers—*How many Essences do you confess in the Godhead?* Ans. *I confess ONE Essence, one Nature, &c.* Qu. *How many Hypostases do you confess in the Godhead?* Ans. *I confess THREE HYPOSTASES*

¹ P. 135.

* The author himself having cited these *Questions* of *Athanasius*, can have no right to object to their authority. However, to satisfy all scruples, let the reader consult that undoubtedly genuine oration, *Unum esse Christum*, in which *hypostasis* and *prosopon* are used throughout as equivalent terms.

er Persons^m, &c. And again, in his *Dialogue* with a *Macedonian*, he says, Τὴν ἡμετέραν οὐ καὶ ἡ παλαιὰ Διαθήκη οἶδεν τὰς ΤΡΕΙΣ ὑποστάσειςⁿ. *Hitherto you have been made to understand; that even the Old Testament declares for the doctrine of THREE Hypostases.* It is likewise clear, that *Athanasius* never meant to confound the sense of these terms, so as to make them synonymous, because he has explained the one *Hypostasis*, by *πρόσωπον*, *person*, and the other, *Usia*, by *οὐσία*, *nature*; which are as distinct in their significations as any other terms whatever. That the term *Hypostasis*, as applied to the *personality*, is not of later date than the *Nicene* age, appears even from an epistle of *Arius* himself, preserved by *Epiphanius*, and written to *Alexander*, bishop of *Alexandria*, before the *Nicene* council. We therein observe the following words—Ὅτι τρεῖς εἰσιν ὑποστάσεις, πατήρ, Υἱός, καὶ Ἅγιον Πνεῦμα. Vid. Epiph. Hæres. LXIX.

II. “*Socrates*, the ecclesiastical historian, “says from *Irenæus*,” (the *grammarian*, not the *Father*); “that though the word *Hypo-*

^m Ἐπὶ τῇ θεῷ ποσας ἑσας ὁμολογῆς; ΑΠ. Μιαθεσια λέγω, μιὰ φύσιν, &c. ΕΡ. Ὑποστάσεις δὲ ποσας ὁμολογῆς ἐπὶ τῇ θεῷ; ΑΠ. Τρεῖς ὑποστάσεις ὁμολογῶ, τρεῖς πρόσωπα, &c. V. II. p. 442.

ⁿ V. I. p. 223.

“ *stasis* was not used by the more ancient
 “ philosophers, yet, says he, you must under-
 “ stand that the moderns make use of it in-
 “ stead of *usia* .”

Socrates does not speak of the *moderns*, as intimating the *Christians*, but the modern *Greek* philosophers; and our business at present is not with them, but with the intention of the *Nicene Fathers*.

III. “ To say therefore that the three Per-
 “ sons in the Trinity are one *Usia* and three
 “ *Hypostases*, is the same thing as to say,
 “ that they are *one substance* and *three sub-*
 “ *stances* at the same time; which I take to
 “ be a contradiction in terms, and therefore
 “ cannot be affirmed even of God him-
 “ self.”

No: it is the same thing as to say, that they are *three persons* and *one nature*; since *Athanasius* explains the word *Hypostasis* by *πρῶτον, person*, and *Usia* by *φύσις, nature*; which is therefore so far from being a contradiction in terms, that it is the very thing the church means to express and insist upon.

IV. “ When it is said in the *Nicene Creed*,
 “ that the Son is *ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας τοῦ Πατρὸς, of the*

• P. 136.

• Ibid. and 137.

“ substance of the Father, and that he is
 “ ομοουσιῳ τῷ Πατρὶ, of one substance with the
 “ Father—wherein does the difference con-
 “ sist? Why, in being said to be *three* sub-
 “ stances at the same time that they are but
 “ one substance¹.”

It is not said, either in this place, or any where else, that the Persons of the Trinity are *three substances*; but when a man is so violently heated with his own opinion, he makes but a very indifferent critic. By the former of these expressions, we are to understand (as it is said in the Creed itself) that the Son was γεννηθῆντα, *begotten*, ἐκ τῆς οὐσίας, of or from the substance of the Father, and by the latter, that when so begotten, he was ομοουσιῳ, of the same substance, nature, or essence, with the Father, though a different *Person* from him. If he was begotten of the Father, he must be of the same essence or nature from which he was begotten, and yet is not to be confounded in person with the Father: which was the heresy of *Sabellius*, who maintained that the Trinity was μονοπροσωπῳ, i. e. that it consisted of one Person numerically the same, but τριωνυμῳ, distinguished by three different appellations.

¹ Ibid.

V. "I am very sensible that in our *English* translation of the Creed, commonly called the *Athanasian* Creed, we have followed the church of *Rome*, whose infallibility can give what sense it pleases to words, in rendering the word ὑπόστασις by the *English* word *person*, that church having rendered it by the *Latin* word *persona* ¹."

Athanasius, *Epiphanius*, and all the *Greek* Fathers ², have expounded it by the *Greek* word προσωπον, *person*; and therefore we have not followed the church of *Rome's* *Latin* word. This remark is succeeded by a long and most perplexed criticism upon the different acceptations of the word *person*, as applied to *men*: which is all wide of the purpose; because we have no concern either with its application to distinct and separate men, or to the same man considered in different capacities, but to the Godhead: and when thus applied, we know what we would mean by it, and scorn any

¹ P. 138.

² ὑπόστασις καὶ προσωπον ταυτὸν ἐστὶ παρ' αὐτοῖς. *Hypostasis* & *persona idem est apud illos*. Sc. Patres. Leont. De Sect. p. 388. And *Suidas* affirms, that ὑπόστασις κατὰ τὴν ἐκκλησιαστικὴν καὶ ἀποστολικὴν παράδοσιν ἐστὶ τὸ προσωπον—*Hypostasis*, according to ecclesiastical and apostolical tradition, is the same with *person*.

low equivocations about it. This attempt upon the *words* whereby we express our faith, is no new thing; for whoever is in the least conversant with ecclesiastical antiquity, will find that the *Arians* always harboured the most implacable enmity against them: for which, no other cause can be assigned, than that these terms, when applied so properly as they are in the Creeds, cut their heresy up by the roots—*hinc illæ lachrymæ!* But their wrath did not confine itself to the terms; it did likewise most amply exert itself against the *Nicene* Bishops, who, with others that embraced their sentiments, were reported by the *Arian* fraternity to be no better than *fools* and *idiots**, while themselves were the only wise and knowing amongst mankind.

VI. “I cannot help saying, it is something
 “ odd to have these two Creeds (the *Nicene*
 “ and *Athanasian*) established in the same
 “ church, in one of which those are declared:
 “ to be accursed, who deny the Son to be of
 “ the same *Hypostasis* or *Usia* with the Fa-
 “ ther; and in the other, it is declared *they*
 “ cannot be saved, who do not assert, that
 “ there is one *Hypostasis* of the Father, and

* See *Socr. Schol.* lib. i. ch. 9.

“ another of the Son, and another of the Holy
“ Ghost ”.

This seeming contradiction arises only from his confounding the words *usia* and *hypostasis*; for though it be said, in the *anathema* annexed at the end of the *Nicene Creed*, that they are accursed who say that the Son is of any other *Hypostasis* or *Usia* than of the Father, yet when it is considered, that the Son is of the *Hypostasis* in one sense, and of the *Usia* in another, the *Athanasian* and *Nicene Creeds* are not at variance. Thus, the Son, as *God*, is of the Father's *Usia*, and partakes of that divine nature or essence, from which he is generated: as a *Son*, he is begotten of the Father's *Hypostasis* or *Person*; which makes the contradiction vanish entirely; since it shews, that there may be three *Hypostases* in the Godhead, as the *Athanasian Creed* sets forth; and that the Son may be begotten of the Father's *Hypostasis*, as it is asserted in the *Nicene*. But, even supposing his observation upon this *anathema* to be just, yet his suspicion of oddness in the establishment of the church is altogether groundless; since it is wholly omitted in that form of the *Nicene*

Creed inserted in our *Book of Common Prayer*; and therefore it is weak to calumniate the Protestant church, for establishing what it hath never established at all.

These are all the remarks I thought it necessary to take any notice of. But the author of them, supposing they have put us into such disorder, that our only way is, to make a fair retreat, and give up the matter as unintelligible, bestows upon us the following sneer—
 “ In order to obviate all these objections, it
 “ is thought sufficient by some to say, that
 “ there are many powers in the divine nature,
 “ which human beings are not capable of
 “ comprehending.” But, with humble submission, we are not reduced to this method of *obviating these objections*: and though such a declamatory method would have spared me much trouble, yet have I endeavoured to set these objections aside, by shewing that, in effect, there are no real objections either against the sense of a Trinity in Unity, or against the manner in which this doctrine is set forth in the Creeds. For whatever degree of humility and acquiescence is expected in relation to the articles of our faith, neither

* P. 146.

the Scripture, nor the church-catholic, requires us to believe, that the Holy Trinity are one and three in *one and the same respect*; which would indeed be a most insuperable contradiction: but in the sense we hold it, there is no contradiction at all.

As for his frequent use of the name *Consubstantialists*, as if those, who believe a *consubstantial* Trinity, were some private party or sect of christians dissenting from the truth—his charging us with following the *Pope's infallibility*—and his affirming with such confidence, that the *revelation of this wonderful doctrine came originally from the Papal chair**—in all this he is as equitable as when he compares us to the *bigotted members of the Church of Rome*, for shewing some regard to sincerity and moral honesty in our subscription to Creeds and Articles. For though in the Holy Scriptures it be not asserted *totidem literis*, that the Trinity is *consubstantial*, yet is it expressly declared, that *the Lord our God is ONE JEHOVAH*, and that *the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are ONE*, that is, one eternal nature, co-equal in majesty, wisdom, power, and every other attribute of essential divinity.

* P. 151.

At our baptism we are, after the ordinance of *Christ* our Lord, solemnly initiated into the faith of a Trinity in Unity.—The inspired Apostles, and from them the church-catholic, pronounce their blessings in strict conformity with this faith, as the High Priest, on the day of the great yearly atonement, did upon the *Israelites* by a threefold repetition of the name *Jehovah*⁷: and the two Testaments, as hath been shewn, abound with the revelation of this divine mystery.

It is therefore, without all controversy, a scriptural truth, that the Godhead is *ONE*, and that in this Godhead there are *Three Persons*: and if the *author* can devise any method of expressing their *unity* more fully and more sensibly than by the word *consubstantial*, let him advance it: but to represent the whole as of no higher an original than the *Papal chair*, when even the very word *consubstantial* was not borrowed from thence, is to betray the weakness of his own cause, and offer an affront to the common sense of every *Protestant* Christian.

Another method he takes of blending this doctrine and Popery together, is by observing,

⁷ Numb. vi. 24.

R 2

that

that “ when the *Protestants* argue against the “ doctrine of *transubstantiation*, the *Papists* “ never fail objecting the equal incredibility “ of a *consubstantial* Trinity².” This is very true : but a *Protestant* is not bound to answer for the indiscretion of a *Papist*, in putting the doctrine of a *consubstantial* Trinity upon a level with a *transubstantiation* of the sacramental elements : and a parallel between these two doctrines cannot possibly turn out to the disadvantage of the former, since the one is subjected to the scrutiny of our senses, and contradicts them ; the other is above our senses, and does not contradict our reason. If indeed he rejects the mystery of a Trinity in Unity, because he is pleased to think it *incredible*, the argument drawn from hence carries with it no more weight than that of a bad example ; the ill effect of which is always rendered as extensive as possible by others of the same persuasion ; who take infinite pains by the means of News Papers and Reviews, to deceive the ignorant, and make the Coffee-houses ring with the praises of such *reformed Theology* as that of this *Essay*, and other weaker writings upon the same subject ; that

² Numb. vi. 24.

we may become *ripe for reformation*, that is, ready to abjure the primitive faith, and to receive in its stead either the scepticism of *Bayle*, or the enthusiastic philosophy of *Socinus*. The christian reader, I trust, will not take me for his enemy, if I give him warning not to be imposed upon by such reports, but to *prove all things, and hold fast that which is good*. The question is not, whether a Trinity was believed by *Hoadley*, *Clarke*, or *Clayton*; but whether it is revealed in the Holy Scripture, not a syllable of which will be invalidated by the disbelief of the whole world. For every controversy concerning the mysteries of our religion will have a second and a more solemn hearing; when God who gave the Word shall come to make inquisition how it hath been received and followed. Our *Arians*, therefore, will do well to consider, not how they may put a face upon their cause in the sight of men, by misrepresenting the Scripture, depreciating the primitive Fathers and Martyrs, applauding to the skies every deistical scribbler, scoffing at uniformity, railing at orthodoxy, and publishing all manner of scandal against the church, and the friends of it; but how all their pretended reformations will

appear in the sight of God ; before whom they must either maintain them as they do now, or take the consequences ; for it will be too late to retract !

REMARKS

REMARKS

ON THE

PRINCIPLES AND SPIRIT

OF A WORK, ENTITLED

THE CONFESSIONAL:

BEING

**A SEQUEL to the SECOND EDITION of a FULL
ANSWER to an ESSAY ON SPIRIT.**



PREFACE.



THE following remarks were drawn up, in substance, soon after the publication of that work which is the subject of them. The author had then neither health nor leisure to fit them for the press; and was under less trouble about it, when he found that the argument was undertaken by others, of whose learning and experience he had a better opinion than of his own. But a new edition of his *Answer to an Essay on Spirit* having been called for, they are now published as a continuation of the same controversy. The *Confessional* is little more than a sequel to the *Essay on Spirit*; and we may judge by the excellent things which the author has proclaimed in favour of the late bishop *Clayton*, and that *Essay*, he will not be offended with me for putting him into the same class with his fellow-labourer.

I would not be thought so much as to insinuate by this publication, that the *Confessional* is not fairly and
fully

fully refuted in those *Three Letters* which have been addressed to its author by a judicious hand : notwithstanding all that satire, flash, and affected superiority, with which the *Letter-writer* is assaulted in the *Occasional Remarks*, which every impartial reader, who has the least knowledge of the world, will easily understand. Nor is it difficult to see, that the *Confessional*, and those *Remarks*, are the work of the same person : for men are known by the cast of their metaphors, and the temperature of their expressions, as effectually as by the turn of their features, and the form of their hand-writing.

But there are readers who will scarcely be at the pains to follow the argument to such a length : as there are doubtless some admirers of the *Confessional*, who have not had patience to attend their guide through all the multifarious doublings and turnings of his historical libel. Therefore I thought it might be of use to go at once to the roots of the argument, and attempt to shew the author's mistakes in a smaller compass : for if his principles are agreeable neither to scripture, nor reason, nor the universal practice of christians in all ages ; scurrilous anecdotes, and scraps of history, pointed against the church and churchmen with all the art the author is master of, and more invectives than any dictionary can supply him with, will never
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compensate for such a defect ; but in the opinion of judges who are under the same prejudices with himself.

They who attend to the humours and practices of mankind, may distinguish truth from error without much reading, by observing the motions of the restless part of the community on different occasions. When the *Confessional* comes abroad, reports are instantly spread far and wide, of a famous, learned, acute, unanswerable work, by an able, dignified, candid, sagacious, masterly, incomparable writer. Pamphleteers, reviewers, and news-writers, proclaim his merits, and the coffee-houses ring with his conquests. The whole bench of bishops are insulted, and the advocates of the church sneered at as mercenaries, and held in defiance ! Such is the public entry of a work against *orthodoxy* and *uniformity* ; and such it hath been in time past. The book called *the Rights of the Christian Church*, which was intended to prove that the Christian church hath no rights at all, but is merely the creation of the civil power, was ushered in with the same popular acclamation : a circumstance described by an ingenious hand in such lively terms, as will not be unacceptable to the learned reader—*Prodiit haud ita pridem e Socinistarum cæno, famosus quidam libellus, &c.—Et tamen hic ipse liber, qui tot undique absurda, tot impietates,*

impietates, tot denique blasphemias continet, mirum in modum omnium libertinorum teritur manibus : ab omnibus rapitur, adamatur. Hic magnificè exultant et triumphant Socinistæ ; palam vociferantur clericorum causam hoc uno libro penitus confossam jacere : nihil esse sani, nihil solidi, quod vel acutissimi theologi Herculeis hisce argumentis repellant.*

On the contrary, when a work of the other sort makes its appearance, such, for example, as *the Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity* ; if you hear any thing of its author, you hear, in the first place, every thing that can be said, truly or falsely, to his disadvantage. Retailers of literary intelligence depreciate his work as not worth reading ; the news-papers rail at him, under the contemptuous appellation of *one William Jones* ; and if the *Arian* party do not undertake to write against his book in form, you are assured there can be no reason for their silence, but the wildness of the composition, and the weakness of the argument. Thus the book steals as it were into the world, creep-

* This passage is extracted from *Hughes's Dissertatio proœmialis*, prefixed to his edition of *Chrysostom de Sacerdotio*. It comprehends an authentic description and vindication of the primitive constitution of the Christian church ; well worth the diligent perusal of younger students in divinity ; who may also read it with advantage as an elegant piece of Latin,

ing by degrees from one hand to another, as if there were treason in it, and making its way slowly to a third and fourth edition, with no helps from public attestation, and against all the obstructions of clamour and ill report ; as christianity prevailed in former times against the universal obloquy of Romans, Greeks, Jews, and Barbarians. So wise and active are some men in their generation ; and they who are once aware of it, will not easily be carried away with every wind of common fame, or common defamation.

I had some thoughts of following the author of the *Confessional* in his capacity of a *Critic*, and exhibiting some examples of the partiality with which he makes his report of books, writers, and controversies. In this age, when the talents of so many are unhappily drowned in a sort of *small reading*, from which no just principles of divinity, or literature, can be extracted, men are guided by names more than things : whence it comes to pass, that characters are saleable commodities, and consequently very apt to be sophisticated. I was unwilling to draw out these remarks to a greater length, otherwise, I think, it might have been easy enough to shew how little submission is due to his literary decisions. However, that I may not seem to throw out an unsupported assertion, I shall fix upon the character of Dr. *Sykes*, to whose abilities he gives his testimony
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in very exalted language. There are a set of disputants who are distinguished as the *sons of truth and liberty-worthies*, whose services, under all disadvantages, have been so great an honour and ornament to the church *. In this class of *worthies* we find Dr. Sykes, who undertook to hold up the credit of *Arian subscription*, in answer to Dr. Waterland. He is farther ornamented with the honourable titles of an *acute writer*—*this ingenious person*—*the ingenious author of the Case* †. We shall see how justly Dr. Sykes is celebrated for his acuteness and ingenuity, if we venture to take a nearer view of him, 1. as a *reasoner*, 2. as a *writer*, and 3. as an *historian*, or relater of facts.

When Dr. Waterland had charged the *Arian* party with fraud and prevarication in subscribing *Trinitarian* articles; his adversaries endeavoured to recriminate, accusing the orthodox clergy with subscribing *Calvinistical* articles, although they were well known to dissent from *Calvin's* doctrine. Dr. Waterland clears the orthodox, by shewing that the articles of the church of *England* were purposely framed to a *neutral* sense; neither affirming nor denying *Calvin's* doctrine, that offence might be taken by neither party; and he affirms

* Confess. p. 171, 173.

† Ibid. p. 186, 190.

it to have been “ abundantly proved, that the articles “ are NOT CALVINISTICAL.” Here Dr. *Sykes* changes the state of the question, and declares *Waterland* not to have been convinced of his own proofs of the ANTI-CALVINISM of the articles*. *Not calvinistical* is altered into *anticalvinistical*. The former of these terms implies *neutrality*, the latter *opposition*. Dr. *Waterland*’s defence rests entirely upon this plain distinction, which Dr. *Sykes* either did or did not understand; and I shall not stay to enquire which part of the dilemma will consist with his *acuteness* and *ingenuity*. In another place, he sets down the words “ well proved to be *Anticalvinian*,” referring to them as if they were the genuine words of Dr. *Waterland*: but, in the place referred to, it is only said to be “ well “ proved that our articles *were not drawn up by Calvin’s scheme* †.” The same mistake occurs in other places, not worth our notice.

All this will appear less wonderful, when it is compared with the same author’s account of the Trinity in Unity, which he calls, “ Dr. *Waterland*’s notions of “ three equally supreme intelligent *agent*, and of one “ intelligent *agents* ‡.” But neither Dr. *Waterland*,

* See *Sykes’s Case of Subs.* p. 31, 32.

† See *Waterland’s Supplement*, p. 51, and *Sykes’s Reply*, p. 36, 37.

‡ See *Waterland’s Supplement*, p. 33.

nor any other Christian, ancient or modern, orthodox or heterodox, did ever believe the Holy Trinity to be three and one *in the same respect*. *Arians* of all sizes have indeed made a common practice of *imputing* this absurdity to us ; though they have generally been content with making us weak enough to believe Three Gods (in the plural) to be one God, (in the *singular*.) But Dr. *Sykes* is not satisfied without carrying quite out of the precincts of grammar, having invented a new transformation of the terms into *three agent*, and *one agents* ; which if the Printer can get over without an error of the press, he will have better fortune with his types, than I have had with my pen.

If we consider the *Doctor* as an *orator*, we shall find his style distinguished by a certain inharmonious repetition, which shews the writer to have laboured under the most extreme poverty of diction, of which, the following are a few examples—*so apparently so—this is just such a pretty way of reasoning as this.—This gave me occasion to demand what were the criteria by which we might judge which those particular articles are, which leave a latitude* *.

As an *historian*, he imagined himself to have found Dr. *Waterland* guilty of a gross anachronism ; and

* See p. 42. 4. 33.

while he is correcting him for it, observes, with an air of triumph, that *Samuel Hubert's* book "was written " forty years after the articles were made, and near " forty after *Cranmer* was rotten in his grave *." If it be remembered that archbishop *Cranmer* was a person of the first ecclesiastical character in this kingdom, a man of exact learning, great piety, and venerable in the eyes of all good men, as a martyr to the protestant cause, the language with which his memory is here treated is consistent neither with decency nor charity, nor indeed with common humanity. But that this same *Cranmer* should be rotten in his grave, whom all the world knows to have been publicly burnt to ashes at a stake, and sent to Heaven in a fiery chariot, is a discovery, of which the whole merit is due to the acute Dr. *Sykes* †. I do not take upon me to say, that this is the particular merit which recommended him to the author of the Confessional, for I rather suppose it to have been that of disbelieving the Creeds, which is a sufficient recommendation with him, who judges of every man's wisdom or folly, by first observ-

* *Waterl. Suppl.* p. 44.

† If the reader will please to consult a *Letter to the Common People*, published with the last edition of the *Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity*, he will find some account of another acute writer, who, in this author's vapouring style, is invested with all the terrors of controversial ability. See *Confess.* p. 320.

ing whether he is *for*, or *against* the church. In this practice he brings to my mind the character of *Georgius Trapezuntius*, a scholastic doctor of eminence in the 15th century.—*Aristotelis admirator summus; Platonis contemptor maximus*. When a critic is thus unhappily swayed by the *summus* on one side, and the *maximus* on the other, his accounts are to be taken with very great abatements. If his *admiration* and *contempt* are each of them misplaced, and have exchanged their proper objects, the matter cannot then be rectified by any discountings. This spirit of partiality hath filled the *Confessional* with malignant ridicule and fulsome panegyric, of which it is not necessary, in this place, to produce any more examples, because some of them will meet us of course in the ensuing *Remarks*; from which the reader may form a judgment of all the rest, as safely and surely as he may know the taste of sea-water, without being obliged to drink up the ocean.

It may be proper to observe, that the *Confessional* is referred to in its original form of the *first edition*; and it ought to be known, for the author's vindication, that these papers might have appeared many months ago, if politics, &c. had not taken off the Printer's attention from works of divinity.

REMARKS

REMARKS
ON
THE CONFSSIONAL.

CHAP. I.

*A short View of the Grounds of this Author's
Dispute against the Church of England.*

WHEN a controversy is started in which the spiritual interests of Christian people are nearly concerned, it is their duty to inquire, as far as they are able, into the real merits of the cause; and to consider the question, if possible, in the same naked and simple state in which it existed in the head of an author, before it was disposed according to the rules of art, and disguised under the rhetorical furniture of a large book, comprehending an hundred different subjects wrought up into one mass.

In conversation, it is not unusual to hear two persons disputing fiercely for a long time, without gaining an inch of ground on either side: because it is the practice of reasoners, who are deficient either in respect of a sound cause, an upright intention, or a clear head, to wander far and wide from the subject in debate. Every subject is so nearly related to other subjects, that the mind of an undesigning reasoner will sometimes slide from one to another, without being sensible of it: but an artful man will rarely fail to be shifting about to all the adjuncts and relatives within his reach, till he can fix upon such as will enable him to make a plausible appearance. He that is in wrath with another, of whom he knows no evil, will asperse his character indirectly, by railing at his connexions, his friends, his family, his ancestors, his children, or even his country itself; all of which are but little to the purpose, and can only shew, that the accuser is equally irritated and unprovided.

In the accusation lately revived against our forms and doctrines by the Author of *The Confessional*, the real grounds of his discontent are comprehended in two short arguments: and I hope I shall be pardoned for throwing them into a logical form, because I

do it merely for the sake of brevity, that I may save trouble to the Reader as well as to the Writer. The first of these arguments stands thus :

The Church of *Rome* hath established false doctrine ;

The Church of *England* hath established false doctrine ;

Therefore the Church of *England* wants *reformation* as much as the Church of *Rome*.

That the Church of *Rome* hath established false doctrine, and doth stand in need of reformation, is readily allowed by all Protestants, because it hath been demonstrated for these two hundred years : But the second proposition, on which the conclusion depends, is not true ; and the Author, as we shall see presently, waves the proof of it, supposing that we shall take it upon his bare word. Where this second proposition is *assumed*, as by the *Arians*, *Socinians*, and the most corrupt part of the Dissenters, the conclusion will be admitted.

The second argument may be expressed as follows :

The Church of *Rome* opposes the *reformation* of her doctrines ;

The Church of *England* opposes the *reformation* of her doctrines ;

Therefore the Church of *England* is as obstinate as the Church of *Rome*.

This conclusion is no better than the former, because the word *doctrines* is *equivocal* in the premises. In the first member of the argument, it signifies such doctrines as we *know* to be *false* ; in the second, such as we can *prove* to be true ; though this Author is no admirer of them.

Every son of the Church of England hath a right to insist upon seeing a refutation of her doctrines as a *first step* ; without which all popular harangues upon the expediency of a reformation, either not at all defined, or amounting to an utter abolition of the establishment, are but so many experiments upon his understanding, and ought to have no more influence than the flourishing of a pen in the air.

When the authority of the Church is called in question, this supposition, that *her doctrines are false*, is always at the bottom of the dispute, though not always visible : for no Protestant, under the character of a *believer*, could ever think of refusing to the Church of Christ an authority to secure what the Gospel itself hath already imposed upon all Christians. Nor was the authority of the

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Church

Church ever questioned with any pious design, till it was evident to all men who would but open their eyes, that the Church had *invented* what she had power only to receive and preserve. If any fraud of this kind can be proved upon the Protestant Church of *England*, her governors, it is to be hoped, will consider of it, and correct it: but then, indefinite accusations, expressed in the most loose and general terms, are not to be admitted for legal evidence. “Certain particulars,” says this Author, “are *equally* proved to want reformation among Protestants”^a as among the Papists. If you should be under any concern to know what these *particulars* are, and should ask a question which is of the last importance, and occurs naturally, instead of any direct answer you will meet with this evasion; “I forbear to give instances, though there are more than one at hand^b :” as if that would have been a *digression*, which is the first step in the controversy. In another place it is affirmed, that the public is *grossly and notoriously wrong*^c : how and where, the reader is left to conjecture as well as he can. Sometimes it is suggested to the populace, that

^a Pref. p. 13, Ed. 1.

^b Ibid.

^c P. 3.

many of superior character in the Church are as much convinced of the falsehood of our doctrines as the Author himself, if they would but as freely declare their minds. What they believe, and what they deny, we are still left to find out as before; but may suppose it to be somewhat not fit to be owned all at once. In the 56th page of his Preface, he takes some pains to raise the expectation of his readers, and threatens us with some great matter, which at last all vanishes in a smoke. He tells us of a certain private party, in which it was his hap to mention a *glaring inconsistency in the case of subscription to our established articles of Religion*, at which some respectable persons in the company expressed the utmost surprize. If it was his desire to be understood, and he did really think this matter capable of making any remarkable impression, he would have directed us how to find some explanation of his meaning; yet we are not given to know any thing farther of this *glaring inconsistency*, than that it makes a *part of his following work, though placed at some distance from the beginning*. In a book of 354 pages, 200 of them, at least, are *at some distance from the beginning*; so that we are still in the dark as before: for how *glaring*
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soever this inconsistency might appear in the Author's eyes, it is not bright enough to betray itself to others by its own light; neither do I know at this moment where to find it, unless he alludes to that *remarkable* and *notorious deviation* (as he calls it) from the *Athanasian* maxim, which is introduced at p. 319; the injustice and futility of which criticism hath been taken notice of upon another occasion^d. At this *distance from the beginning* he ventures to open his design; declaring himself *neither afraid nor ashamed to call for a review of our Trinitarian forms*; and, in the course of his work, he refers to and recommends as oracular, though a professed enemy to all impositions, the opinions of *Clarke, Hoadley, Sykes, Clayton* and some others of lesser note. But these things are spoken in such general terms, and with so small an appearance of argument, that the Author himself seems to be sensible how much he hath been wanting in this part of his undertaking; and observes, toward the end of his book, that "it may possibly be expected he should descend to particulars, and point out some of the principal objects of the

^d See a Letter to the Common People, published with the third edition of the *Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity*, § X. reform

reform he solicits*." In this he judges rightly: for it would not only be a dangerous but a ridiculous step, to enter on the important work of reformation, without first being sure of what is amiss. But his subject, he tells us, " leads him only to *one* particular, the case of subscription to *human* Creeds and Confessions, and other ecclesiastical forms, which are required to be assented to, as being agreeable to the word of God." Subscription is indeed but one particular circumstance of our ecclesiastical discipline, and is good, bad, or indifferent, according to its object; but the Creeds, Articles, and ecclesiastical forms of worship to which it extends, do comprehend the whole system of our faith and religion, out of which he ought to have selected the obnoxious articles, and have shewed us plainly how far they disagree with the word of God. But in doing this, he must have exposed his own set of doctrines to be seen and examined by the public; a task neither promising nor agreeable, if we may judge by a certain shyness which hath produced those ambiguities and dodgings already mentioned. Therefore, he proceeds, as before, in general terms; ob-

* P. 336.

serving,

serving, that “undoubtedly such of these” (Creeds and Confessions) “as have not this agreement with holy writ, ought not to be retained in the Church^f.” So we all say; though indeed we never heard of any Christian Creed or Confession which disagreed with the word of God in every article, as this observation supposes them to do. If any one article is *unscriptural*, that article ought to be reformed: but it will not *thence* follow, that the remaining thirty-eight which *are scriptural* should be all thrown aside in the lump, and subscription itself abolished. A political orator might as well have argued from the inexpediency of the *American* stamp-act, to the repealing of all the English laws, and in favour of anarchy.

With this foundation the writer of the *Confessional* frames his conclusions, raises his exhortations, and proposes his conditions; allowing, with a pious sort of casuistry, which he may explain at some other opportunity, that although our forms do disagree with the word of God, “nevertheless, as something is due to the ignorance and prejudices of well-meaning people, it may not be expedient to dis-

^f P. 336.

continue the *use* of them all at once, provided proper endeavours are used to prepare the people for their removal at a seasonable time, by informing them wherein their disagreement with the Christian Scripture consists[†]. We thank him for this indulgence; but are of opinion, that this *disagreement* is what ought *now* to have been pointed out to us in *the Confessional*; because we shall make but an indifferent figure, if we have it to look for when our fences are all pulled down. And certainly it hath not appeared to us as yet, though we have read *Clarke's Doctrine of the Trinity*, *Sykes's Case of Subscription*, the *Free and Candid Disquisitions*, together with the *Essay on Spirit*, to whose old objections this Author hath added nothing but new calumnies, of which some account will be given in another place.

Our Church, as he would have it believed, now is, and always hath been, an enemy to reformation. She hath had many opportunities of improvement, and never been wise enough to embrace any one of them. It may, therefore, be worth our while to consider briefly how the Church is circumstanced, and

what obligations she is under to such reforming claimants as the Author of the Confessional.

The Church having the oracles of truth committed to her, and being bound to provide in the best manner she can, as well for the edification of all her children as for her own peace and security as a society, extracts and recommends such articles of doctrine as she finds revealed to her in the holy Scripture: and in the course of her work expressly disclaims her own authority, as insufficient of itself to bind any *article of faith* upon the consciences of her members.

These doctrines then, thus extracted and recommended by the Church, as the *witness and keeper of holy writ*, either have the authority of the Scripture, or they have not. If they have, then her members are bound to receive them, not as the doctrines of the Church, but of the Scripture. And in this no man will say that the Church departs from her principle, or that the principle itself is unscriptural.

But on the other hand, if any doctrine so proposed by the Church has not the authority of the Scripture to support it, and the falsehood of it can plainly be proved by the same authority;

authority; then the Church, by her own principles, is obliged to attend to all such remonstrances as are made in a proper manner, and supported by proper evidence; as the remonstrances of learned, and pious, and reasonable men, will never fail to be. In several instances the Church hath actually submitted to do this. The invocation of saints, the doctrine of transubstantiation, the red  mption of souls out of Purgatory by masses, the worship of images, which had been allowed and practised for many ages, were objected to, as contrary to the Scripture; and are now not only removed but protested against in the articles, as so many errors: which protestation (by the way) would fall with the articles, and we should no longer be *Protestants*, unless it were by accident; at least we must be taken for such upon trust.

The Church of *Rome*, as her conduct hath unhappily proved, thought it more eligible to preserve her corruptions than recede from her infallibility: But the Church of *England*, since the reformation, never did, nor doth now think it any reflexion upon her wisdom and authority, that these errors were corrected upon her own principle; and she will without question, as she safely may, be ready to follow
her

her own example in other cases, provided there shall appear to be as *sufficient reason* for so doing as for reforming the corruptions above-mentioned.

But if any of her doctrines should be rescinded without *reason*, and her members released from their obligation to such things as are revealed in the Scripture, she would exceed her commission as dangerously by detracting from, as by adding to the articles of the Christian faith. The Church cannot bind where God hath loosed; and it must be equally true, that where God hath bound us, the Church can have no authority to set us free. Were she to be guilty of such weak compliances, her true children would have as just a cause of complaint against her then, as her opponents, the *Arians*, Dissenters, and Freethinkers pretend to have now; and the Papists would object it to us, with great appearance of reason, that religion can have no firm footing when separated from the authority of the apostolical chair.

CHAP. II.

On the right of Protestant Churches to establish Confessions of Faith.

THE author's observations are ushered in and the *right* of Protestant Churches is *prejudged*, by the following reflection,—that “there never yet was any instance of a prosperous usurpation destitute of advocates to lay in for it a claim of right and justice^a.” Perhaps not; yet *right* and *usurpation* are two different things. If the claim of the Church of *England* is to be suspected only because it hath met with advocates to defend it, the Gospel itself ought to have been suspected upon the same account ever since it was published. But let us answer this reflection with another, equally true and more to the purpose; that “there never yet was an instance of any establishment, how just and reasonable soever, which some men have not thought it their interest to assault with weak reasonings and false accusations.”

When we are pleading in defence of established Confessions, our *fundamental position*,

^a P. 21.

as he very justly allows, is this: Every particular Church, considered as a society, has a right, as other societies have, to secure its own peace and welfare by all lawful means*." This position he would overthrow, by pretending that it proves too much; being sufficient, if admitted, to justify *all the persecutions of the Heathens against the Christians, and even the Popish Inquisition*¹. But in this answer he is too much in haste to recollect the terms of his own position; which affirms no more, than that the Church may secure its own peace and welfare by *lawful means*. Inquisitions and persecutions are *unlawful means*; therefore his consequence is not a just one. If it were, self-preservation would be such a very bad principle, that mankind should invent some way of providing against it (if any such provision can be made when self-preservation is given up;) and a society, if opposed, would have nothing to do but to be ruined, by resigning itself quietly to the will of its enemies.

There are no *means* but lawful and unlawful. The unlawful, by their own nature, are not to be made use of; nor the lawful, because the other will thereby be justified: and so we are to do nothing, but suffer from *men of*

* P. 22.

¹ Ibid.

active spirits, who will never lay themselves under that restraint which they would impose upon others. When this writer hath in view the propagation of his own opinions, he is florid and copious in defence of liberty; but in this answer he hath laid an ax to the root of it; for there can be no such thing as liberty, if societies are deprived of the benefit of self-preservation.

The use of lawful means hath been pleaded for, not to secure unlawful ordinances, but such only as are agreeable to the word of God. This, however, in his way of reasoning, makes no difference: for “the proviso, that Church-ordinances be *agreeable to the word of God*, will not help the Protestant Churches at all^k.” If this is true, all Protestant Churches are in a very woful condition: for there are but two sorts of authority, human and divine. The former is not sufficient of itself to authenticate articles of faith and doctrine; and if the latter is not, there is no authority left to which they can appeal. The Protestant Churches have laid it down as a principle, that all Christians are bound by the *word of God*; consequently, by what is *agreeable to the word*

^k P. 23.

of God: and they have always imagined, that if this *agreement* were once allowed them, nothing could supersede the obligation of submitting to it, but the super-prophetical light of the Quakers, or the interposition of an infallible judge, such as they have at Rome.

Every Englishman, as a member of civil society, is bound by the law of the land; therefore, we say he is bound by the same law when applied to particular cases, and administered in the sentence of a magistrate: otherwise, he is bound and not bound at the same time. If it should be objected, that the sentence may deviate from the law, this is foreign to the case in hand; because we argue at present upon the *proviso*, that it is *agreeable to the law*.

The erring members of the Christian Church shew themselves to be what they are, by a misapplication of the word of God; which *St. Peter* tells us, they *who are unlearned and unstable wrest unto their own destruction*¹. How is the Church to provide against their errors, but by another application of it? If not, we invest the enemies of the Church with a privilege which we deny to the Church

¹ 2 Pet. iii. 16.

herself, who hath at least as good, if not a better right to it. Neither the law of God, nor the law of the land, can administer themselves: and if they are not to be applied and interpreted, then they were made, not to condemn what is wrong, or justify what is right, but only to be looked at, and contradicted, in the way of *private judgment*.—But let us hear how he reasons in his own words.

“Established confessions” (*agreeable to the word of God*) “being human compositions, must either be subject to examination, by the private judgment of those who profess to make the written word of God the only rule of their religion, or else the Church must claim a right of interpreting the Scriptures” (*i. e.* of making ordinances *agreeable to the word of God*) “for all her members, exclusive of the rights of private judgment^m.”

If established confessions, notwithstanding their agreement with the word of God, may be over-ruled by private judgment, it must follow, that the Scripture itself may be over-ruled upon the same principle; unless it can be proved, that the word of God is changed

^m P. 23.

into the word of man, by being transplanted into an established confession.

The Author supposes private judgment entitled to this prerogative, by making the written word the rule of its religion *; and as the Church certainly does the same, so far as her confession is *agreeable to the word of God*, there will arise, upon the same ground, a right of public judgment to society: which judgment, if it can be controlled by the judgment of an individual, the right here mentioned will be no right, and society will be no society. Unless this right, thus defined, is allowed to the Church, we must suppose the Scripture contrary to itself in respect of the same doctrines; for here we shall have private judgment, with the word of God in its hand, pleading against an agreement with the word of God; which is nonsense. And what will be the issue? Why, the Church cannot give us a rule of doctrine from the Scripture, because an individual is entitled to make his

* “ The *Puritan* would be judged by the word of God. If he would speak clearly, he means himself, but is ashamed to say so; and he would have me believe him before a whole Church, that has read the word of God as well as he.” Selden. T. T. p. 111. 3d edit.

own use of it ; and, as a society cannot receive a rule of doctrine from the private judgment of a single person, unless it be that of the pope, we are to have no public rule at all ; consequently, that precept of the Apostle,—*let us all walk by the same rule*—was unnecessary and groundless.

But he will say, the *written word* is a rule ; meaning, as I presume, the Scripture in its *own terms*. Now, to say nothing against the bulk of the Scripture, as improper for a Creed or Confession, it is a rule which hath been applied with equal assurance to the heresy of *Arius*, the novel inventions of *Popery*, the antichristian philosophy of *Socinus*, the outrageous practices of the *Anabaptists*, and the absurd enthusiasm of the *Quakers*. That it may not be *so applied* by the teachers of this Church, the *Articles* are a system, in which the Scripture, as the only *rule of religion*, is particularly pointed against these and other errors. The rule is still the same as before ; only the articles contain an application of it to some particular and necessary cases ; without attending to which, this Church must actually be what the Papists represent it to be, a Babel of confusion ; and Christianity itself would sink into a chaos. Experience
teaches

teaches us, that without such an application the Scripture becomes no Scripture, when those men have the handling of it, whose heads are filled with the conceits of some heretical leader, and their hearts inflamed with an enthusiastic zeal of infusing them into others. This Author can play with it as he pleases upon his own principles. If the Church ascertains a scriptural doctrine in short by some equivalent terms of her own, he can oppose to it the Scripture at large in its own terms: If the Scriptures are so express as to require no interpretation, he can have recourse to *different senses*, leaving the written word for private exposition. Thus he hath the advantage of the Church either way. He hath the merit of setting up the pure word of God against human inventions, and the convenience of adapting it at pleasure to other inventions of himself or his friends.

If a right of determining for all her members is allowed to the Church, he supposes this must *exclude the rights of private judgment*. But this doth by no means follow: for the Church hath a right of determining, so far only as she determines *agreeable to the word of God*. An individual can have no rights but what are grounded upon the same

agreement with the word of God ; therefore, it is absurd to set up one of these rights exclusive of the other, because they coincide, and are in effect but one and the same thing ; though always with this difference, that the judgment of society is a judgment of *authority*, while private judgment is no more than a judgment of *discretion* or *opinion*. If this latter is what the Author contends for, it cannot be *excluded* by the decisions of any authority upon earth : for thoughts are free ; and if they are absurd or injurious, they must be accounted for at last to the Searcher of all hearts. It will always be impossible, in the nature of things, to exclude such private judgment from examining and determining as it pleases, against all authority, divine as well as human. But then such private judgment will not be *authoritative*, or binding to others, but will and must be over-ruled in this world by the acts of the society to which it hath joined itself : else there can be no such thing as government or society in the world.

This, indeed, is the genuine consequence of our Author's principle : for he makes private judgment not private but authoritative ; asserting, that it “ precludes the right of the Church to establish any thing without the
previous

previous consent of all her members^a." Whence it follows, that society cannot stop the proceedings of an individual, but an individual may stop the proceedings of society, and that all the members of society are in a state of equality: whereas the very idea of a society implies a subordination in bodies corporate as in the body natural; and the Apostle, in the earliest state of the Christian Church, argues at large from one of these to the other, in the 12th chapter of his first epistle to the *Corinthians*. If this plan of the Author were to take place, and men should arise *speaking perverse things*, as *Hymeneus* and *Philetus*, to *overthrow the faith* of weak Christians, they must be admitted as judges in their own cause; and have it in their power to put a negative upon all their brethren, to prevent the establishment of any such regulations as might affect the well-being of their own perverse opinions: that direction too of the Apostle to the ministers of the Church, — *A man that is an heretic, reject^o*; and that other to the people, — *Obey them that have the rule over you, whose faith follow^p*, might be blotted out of the Scripture; for the latter would be useless, and the former impracticable.

^a P. 23.

^o Tit. iii. 10.

^p Heb. xiii. 17.

This plan, however, will hardly consist with what the Author allows (or *seems* to allow) upon another occasion. “Single men” he says, “may be called upon to correct and even retract their doctrines, not only without offence, but in some cases with advantage to the *common faith*.” How can this be? for the *consent* of these *single men*, who are thus to be called upon, is necessary, before any *common faith* can be established. Without some *common faith*, by what standard are their doctrines to be judged of? And without some established constitution of the Church, who shall be the *persons* appointed to judge them? If the *common faith* is that revealed in the Scripture, it is equally pretended to by *Arians*, *Socinians*, *Quakers*, *Anabaptists*, and other Sectaries, amongst whom there is no community of sentiment. The Church, therefore, must apply this rule, without the consent of these *single men*; or all hope of *advantage* must be given up, and the *common faith* left to the mercy of its adversaries.

Here it is pleasant to observe the dexterity of some writers, who find it convenient, as the subject varies, to take both sides of the question. They have the art of saying things

¹ P. 41, 42.

in such a manner, by the help of little qualifying clauses, that they shall not appear to have said them at all, if they are pressed with a contradiction. We have an instance of it in this passage. The author seems to grant, that *single men may be called upon to retract their doctrines with advantage to the common faith*; though, indeed, he doth not say *by whom*, and it is very hard to guess: however, if it is really his opinion, after what he hath said of the rights of private judgment, that individuals may be censured for their doctrines by any public authority of society; his principle vanishes in a smoke of his own raising. To avoid this he hath taken care to insert the condition, "*if they see reason*:" and therefore, if they *do not see reason*, they are still to proceed as they please, and the *common faith* must at last yield to *private opinion*.

Such is the forlorn, and defenceless state of that Church and its faith, which Christ left upon earth for the salvation of mankind! No protection can be received from the temporal sword against spiritual wickedness, without incurring the penalty of *perishing by the sword*: and as to the spiritual, which is the word of God, it cannot be used against any offender,

offender, till his own consent shall put it into the hands of his judges !

But if this consent is necessary now, I apprehend it was always necessary : and if so, the doctrine of the Apostles ought not to have been settled, and the *ministers of Satan* (as they are called) ought not to have been censured in virtue of any established rule, till all the Gentiles were come in, and their consent formally obtained : nor even then ; for others might be born, who would in time object even to the condition of Baptism in the name of the Trinity ; and then it must have been given up to them : because no condition of communion is to be established, without the previous *consent of ALL, who without that condition would have a right to Christian communion*. Had there been no such *condition* imposed as *baptism*, Heathens would have had *a right to Christian communion* : therefore it follows, that this condition of *Baptism* could not be imposed without the *consent of Heathens* ! What wild work would this doctrine produce, if it were admitted into civil society ? It would require that nothing should be established as a condition of holding employments of trust, or enjoying any privileges under the government, without the *previous consent of all those who have no*
good

good will to the government; and would thrust themselves into office, only for an opportunity of overturning it as fast as possible, and introducing some other œconomy, more agreeable to their own temper and complexion.

Upon the whole, this author's plan is absolutely indefensible, if the Church is a *society*. Therefore he should have proved, that Christ and his Apostles did not plant any Church upon earth that could properly be called a Society: for if it was a society, it would have the native rights of a society: and if it had them once, it must have them still; unless he is able to shew at what time, and by what means, they were forfeited. So the late learned Bishop *Coneybeare* argued, in what the author calls his *famous subscription sermon*: and, instead of confuting his position by tracing the Church up to its original, he asserts, that "every intelligent Christian," (that is, every Christian who is intelligent in his own conceit) "with the Scriptures before him, is, upon "Protestant principles;" that is, upon *his* principle, "and in decrees of this nature, *a Church to himself*." And thus he goes about to prove it: "every Christian hath a right to

^r P. 23, 24. note.

search the Scriptures.—And if it is his duty to *search*, it must be also his duty” (*i. e.* his *right*) to *determine* for himself; and if he finds just cause, to dissent from any, or all the establishments upon earth’.” Whether he finds just cause, or not, he may determine for himself, and no man alive can hinder him. In the Convocation, General Council, or Communion of Saints, which he carries about with him, he may determine that white is black, and good is evil: but then we are to observe, that all this, by the terms of the argument, is—*for himself*: whereas, the question is, whether the act of such a person, determining for himself in favour of heresy, sedition, or whatever else he pleases, will be so far binding to society, as to preclude the establishment of what is *agreeable to the word of God*.

His Church in a single person is a curiosity *sui generis*, and may pass with some people for a mere creature of the imagination. Most certainly it is not that Church spoken of by *St. Paul*, which is *not one member, but many*, and must be so of necessity; because there are many things to be done for a Christian, which

* Ibid.

a man

a man cannot do for himself. But this Church in a single person must *baptise himself*; and if he wants to be a minister, he must *ordain himself*, or, as Bp. *Andrews* speaks, must *lay his own hands upon his own head*; then he must *prefer himself*, and *absolve himself*, and *marry himself*, and *bury himself*. However, it seems, this was once realized, as far as it well could be, upon a very ridiculous occasion. “There was a dispute at *Amsterdam* between *Ainsworth* and *Broughton*, whether the colour of *Aaron’s* ephod were *blue*, or a *sea-water green*; which did not only trouble all the dyers in *Amsterdam*, but drew their several followers into sides and factions, and made good sport for all the world but themselves alone. By reason of which divisions and subdivisions, they fell at last into so many fractions, that ONE of them, in the end, became a CHURCH OF HIMSELF; and having none to join in opinion with him, baptized himself, and thereby got the name of a *Sebaptist*, which never any Sectary or Heretic had got before[†].” Such are the effects, when Confessions are abolished, and every man proceeds according to his own private judgment, without prudence, charity,

[†] Heylin’s Hist. of the Presb. p. 375.

restraint, or direction. So would the *Churches* be *multiplied* amongst us!

Into this state of separation, it is the opinion of our Author, that every man must be thrown, who in virtue of his own Churchship shall determine upon the Scripture by the rule of his private judgment: for every such disquisitor will soon discover, that all Protestant Churches, without exception, are mistaken. “If the people,” saith he, “were diligent and careful in searching the Scriptures, every one for himself (as all Protestants agree they ought to do) the consequence would most probably be, that the far greater part of honest and sensible Christians should be excluded from the communion of every Church which has an established Confession.” From this passage it is obvious, that the Author (taking himself for one of these *honest* and *sensible* Christians) hath a quarrel against some one doctrine common to all the Confessions in the Christian world; and that he holds either few Christians, or none at all, to be *honest* and *sensible*, unless they judge of the Scripture with *his* prejudices. Now, to say nothing against the vanity and uncharitable-

ness of this reflexion, its disagreement with truth and fact is notorious; there being very many, at this day, who search the Scripture both diligently and carefully, without finding in themselves any disposition to *Arianism* or *Socinianism*; and others, who, by searching the Scripture, are reclaimed from these errors: of which I could give particular examples. The Author of the Confessional, however, could make short work with them all, by pronouncing such Christians to be neither *honest* nor *sensible*.

It hath always been the custom of those who object to established Confessions of Faith, to pretend the authority of the Scripture: I say, to *pretend* it; for certainly it hath not been always at the bottom of their objections. This writer would have us believe, that the disagreement of honest and sensible Christians with the general doctrine of Protestants, is the *consequence* of their searching the Scripture. But appearances are very much against them; because their searching the Scripture hath been represented by themselves as *posterior* to this disagreement. Dr. *Clarke* hath laid it down, as the *first principle of Natural Religion*, that *God is but one Person**. He discovered this

* See *Clarke's Script. Doctr.* p. 1. § 1.

principle, either with the Scripture, or without it. If with the Scripture, then it is absurd to call it the first principle of Natural Religion: If without the Scripture, then it was impossible he should receive the doctrine of the Orthodox, how plainly soever the Scripture may have revealed it. This principle being once laid down as the original suggestion of *Nature*, all posterior examinations of the Scripture can be nothing more than laboured accommodations of it to a contrary hypothesis already established in the mind of the examinant. Dr. *Clarke* had much learning, and was an acute reasoner: but while there are these and other flaws in his religious principles, the man who would silence us with his example and authority, is only exposing his own bigotry, and contradicting his favourite principle of *private judgment*; which appears, at last, to be no other than the judgment of Dr. *Samuel Clarke*, EXCLUSIVE of that of his readers. Our adversaries have written copious and florid recommendations of scripture researches, to the apparent renunciation of all human authority: but I have heard it observed, that if we could persuade men to study the Scripture, instead of the Religion of Nature, so *admired* by the *Deists* (as the

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Bishop

Bishop of *Clogher* hath observed in his *Essay on Spirit*⁷) and which has *nothing but human authority* to support it; we should remove the foundations of more than half the *Arianism* of the present age.

We have now heard the Author's character of those Christians, who search the Scripture in such a fashion as disposes them to contradict established Confessions. As for the rest, he declares them in few words, to be either knaves or naturals. "The adherence of such numbers to the peculiar doctrines of the Church from which they receive their denomination, and even to some doctrines common to the Creeds and Confessions of all Churches which call themselves orthodox," (a circumlocution for the *doctrine of the Trinity* "is owing to their ignorance, their indolence, their secularity, or the early prejudices of education".) As it is not in the power of all men to examine critically what they adhere to, it is happy for them when their rulers have no

⁷ P. 25. The principles of which Religion were so much admired by this same writer, that he undertook to confute the Trinity, by considering it in the *light of Nature and Reason*. See his *Title*.

⁸ P. 25.

evil design upon their understandings. I speak here of those whose ignorance arises from a want of capacity or opportunity; which must be the case with very many. There is another generation in all communities, who are weak enough to take every thing upon trust, or too much engaged with pleasure and secularity to spend any of their time in searching for reasons of the hope that is in them. If it were the fashion to believe that *Socinus* and *George Fox* the Quaker were true Apostles, ignorance and indolence would be content with the error; and supposing them to have a little dash of vanity, they would scoff, perhaps, at the Christians of better times for being led by the nose, and not having wisdom or spirit enough to believe as they do. But is truth to be disregarded and banished from society, because ignorant people do not know the grounds of it, or may be influenced by their betters to accept of error instead of it? Does it follow that a man's profession is false, because his conduct is unworthy of it? The Apostle tells us of some who *hold the truth in unrighteousness* *. Does he mean to reflect upon *the truth*, or upon those *ungodly persons*

* Rom. i. 18.

who hold it in an improper manner? Let ignorance, and indolence, and secularity then, each of them in their turns, or all of them together, approve the Orthodox Confession; this will be no reproach to the Confession itself, unless the same ignorance, and indolence, and secularity was at the bottom of its first establishment, to blind and corrupt the fathers of the reformation: and let me add, that if *ignorance* and *secularity* must have a Confession, God forbid it should be of their own making; especially if they should happen to be possessed with the rage of proselyting; for *ignorance* will fabricate false doctrine, for want of proper materials; and *secularity* (using its own *private judgment*) will invent such a religion as shall flatter its own vices.

This leads us to the consideration of another plea of right, which, according to our Author, who is seldom so gracious as to make any allowances, is *perhaps the best the Church has to allege*. “A necessity for Confessions hath been inferred, from the indispositions and incapacities of the people to examine and judge for themselves*.” And this is a plea, to which every compassionate Christian will be inclined

* P. 26.

to give as much weight as he can. The common people being, for the most part, unlearned, and incapable of searching the Scriptures for themselves, are liable to be deceived by those who pervert the Scriptures to the ruin of themselves and others: and therefore it is thought necessary that they should be instructed according to some known rule of sound doctrine; and their safety was a principal consideration with those who were entrusted with the compiling of the rules now established. But here again he is troubled with consequences, and is terribly afraid of doing good, lest some evil should come of it. The people must be left to take their chance, and the Church must not insist upon her *right*, or, more properly, her *duty*, of providing for their spiritual *necessities*; because this "argument would equally vindicate the Church of *Rome*, with respect to many of her impositions^b." By the *impositions* of the Church of *Rome*, we understand those novel and false opinions which distinguish Papists from Protestants, and gave occasion to the Reformation; therefore, his consequence, in other words, will stand thus: "If we allow it

to be the duty of the Church of *England* to instruct her people with sound doctrine, then it will be *equally* the duty of the Church of *Rome* to corrupt the people with false doctrine. If this Church establishes any Creed, the *Romish* Church may establish the Creed of Pope *Pius V.* both being *equally* necessary, from the indispositions and incapacities of the people." When he was about it, he might have inferred, with as much justice, that if one mother is bound to feed her children with bread, another will be under an *equal* obligation to give her children a dose of poison. And so much for the indispositions of the people.

He goes on to observe, that "these indispositions and incapacities in the Clergy would be but an awkward reason for making their subscription necessary^c." They would certainly; and, therefore, I believe they were never given or thought of as a reason. The oaths are not administered to *teach* the duty of allegiance to those who take them, but in order to know whether they intend to perform what they understood before. So the Articles are not offered as a catechism to the Clergy to

^c P. 26.

teach them a religion, which they are supposed already to have studied: but as a test of their religious opinions, that the Church may know whether the people will be safe under their teaching; that is, whether the sheep are committed to a *wolf*, or to a *shepherd*. These are the terms of the Scripture; and they express that peculiar sort of capacity or incapacity in the Clergy, of which the Articles are intended as a test. There may be a very great want of faith, hope, and charity, where there is no considerable defect in point of learning or natural capacity. A man may have his head filled with strange opinions, contrary to the sobriety of the Gospel, and his heart inflamed with a vehement desire of making disturbances in the Church, to the scandal of religion, and the breach of brotherly love and union among Christians. The intention of the Church, in appointing Confessions from the beginning, was to detect this spirit of error: and it was always thought necessary that it should be detected, if possible, and the evil effects of it prevented by timely caution. *I beseech you, brethren, saith the Apostle, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the DOCTRINE which ye have learned*^d. And upon

^d Rom. xvi. 17.

another occasion he *commands* the Christians *in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*, which expression amounts to an abjuration, to *withdraw* themselves *from every brother who walketh disorderly, and not after the TRADITION received from us*^{*}. For securing this *tradition* he prescribes the following method to the Clergy: *Charge some that they teach no other doctrine*[†]. We take our Confession to be such a *charge* as this, practically applied to all the teachers of the Church: and if the Author can instruct us how to apply it in such a manner as *better* to secure the *end* of it, which is *apostolical tradition, or the faith delivered to the Saints*, every friend to true religion will give him thanks for his advice. In the meantime, we are well assured, that no one good purpose can ever be answered by withdrawing it.

But notwithstanding all that can be urged from the commands of the Scripture, or the necessities of the people, our cause is but a lost one at last; and for this reason, "Certain it is, in so far as the Laity are allowed not to be bound by these Church Confessions, the point of right to establish them is fairly given up[‡]." But if the Laity are bound in common with

* 2 Thess. iii. 6, 7.

† 1 Tim. i. 3.

‡ P. 28.

the Clergy, then this right is not *fairly given up*. Let us consider whether they are or not. The Laity can be allowed to be *not* bound only in so far as they do *not* subscribe the Confession of the Church. But if they are *not* bound because they do *not* subscribe, then it will follow, that the Clergy are bound only because they *do* subscribe. And to *what* doth this subscription bind them? To the belief of the *true God*, the *Maker and Preserver* of all things; of the divine authority of the *Scripture*; of *eternal salvation by Jesus Christ*; of the benefit of the *sacraments*; the necessity of *good works*, &c. In a word, it binds them to a summary of their Christian faith. But if they had not *subscribed* it, they had been free from all obligation; that is, they need not have been Christians. Either this is true, or the Laity are bound to our Church Confessions, though they do not subscribe them. To keep the Clergy steady to their profession, some present obligations are added to spiritual considerations; but no man can imagine that the latter became void by the introduction of the former. The laws of every Christian state inflict temporal penalties on the breach of the eighth commandment: yet the eighth commandment is of force with them

or

or without them; and there will be a reckoning on that account in the other world, if there is none in this. The same is true in all other cases, where the laws of God are farther secured by the human sanctions of emoluments on the one hand, or penalties on the other. But his reasoning implies, either that the former are made void by the latter, or, that no man is bound, unless he is bound by *both*; therefore, to argue with him a little in his own way, it is not clear that the Laity are free from all obligation, even by the present discipline of the establishment; subscription being required of those Laymen, whose conduct is supposed to have any particular influence upon religious society; as of graduates in the Universities, many of whom continue in lay professions as long as they live; and of all schoolmasters, of whom the majority, I believe, are Laymen. With the Articles of *Edward VI.* a *Catechism* was enjoined^b by public authority, (probably without consulting the *private judgment* of the *children* who were to learn it) that the Laity might be brought up in the same principles as were subscribed by the Clergy. The Catechism,

^b Strype's *Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 420.

as it now stands in the Book of Common Prayer, is part of an *act of parliament*, and contains, in short, the substance of what is expressed more at large in the Articles. And moreover, if the obligation of the Laity is thought of while they are children, it is not forgotten or given up so long as they live. For let us ask, Why is the Clergyman bound to those particular doctrines expressed in the Articles? Because the contrary doctrines are not fit to be preached *to the laity*. Thus the public authority, which requires subscription, hath considered the Laity as the *end*, and the Clergy as the *means*; and, in so doing, could never intend that the Laity should be without obligation. Had this writer considered the case, before he undertook to pronounce upon it, he might have spared his sarcasm upon the Clergyman, as being *obliged to teach doctrines, which the Layman is not obliged to believe, or to practise*. The Laity are not indeed generally called upon to *subscribe*, nor are they generally required to swear allegiance to the government; yet they are no more allowed to be without obligation in the one case than the other. So long as the law of God is in force, they are bound *in foro conscientiæ*, without swearing or subscribing at all; and
must

must answer it to the supreme law-giver, if they disturb the State with treason, or the Church with false doctrine.

Our Author would have looked upon it as an instance of great disingenuity in some zealot of the Church, had he found such an one pleading against himself, on a supposition that the Laity are *not bound*; and then railing at him, on a supposition that they *are bound*; and all this in the same page. Yet this is his own practice; and let the reader judge whether his words do not amount to a proof of it. "A law inducing men to profess, by a solemn act, that their RELIGIOUS OPINIONS are what they really are not, is no mark of charity in any Church¹." This *law*, as the reader will find, if he turns back to the preceding page, is the *test-act*; the *men* he speaks of, are *Laymen*; the *religious opinions* they *profess by a solemn act*, are the opinions of the Church of *England*; these opinions are expressed in her Creeds and Articles: to these the Laity are bound *by a solemn act*; and thus he complains of an obligation, which he supposes, at the same time, not to exist! casting all the reproach upon the *Church*. But the Church does not make *acts of parliament*; they are

¹ P. 28.

made by the State, for its own security, in common with that of the Church. Papists, on pretence of religion, will overthrow a State which is *Protestant*; and *Calvinists* have once overthrown the State, for being *episcopal*. This law, he says, is no mark either of *wisdom* or *charity*; but *experience* will make every body *wise*, if it is not their own fault; and where self-preservation is thought necessary, *charity* begins at home.

His definition of this act is like those many other descriptions of men and things, with which they who will read his book may be better acquainted, if they desire it. The *test-act* is a law obliging men to profess that their religious opinions are *what they really are*; not what they *are not*. When an oath is prescribed by the law, it is not intended that men should *swear falsely*, or that they should prophane the Bible, by professing upon it a faith and hope which they *have not*. If they make this act a snare to themselves, their own infidelity, or want of conscience, is in fault, and not the wisdom or charity of the government under which they live. There is no law, how just or sacred soever, which ill men cannot find ways of affronting or eluding to their own condemnation; and his way of
stating

stating the laws would make them all equally ridiculous. For the *inducement* he speaks of is not in the law, but in the *advantage* which a wicked man hopes to get by *breaking* or *abusing* the law. If the *test-act* were changed into a law, requiring men to profess that they believe the Scripture to be the word of God, a bishopric, a deanry, or even an *archdeaconry*, might possibly *induce* an Infidel, who hath no religion at all, to make the usual profession. If this should appear, the Author might then argue for the repeal of it, as of a *scandalous* law, *inducing* men to profess that their religious opinions *are what they are not* : and a few such arguments, applied in their proper extent, would serve to unhinge all the law and order that is now in the world.

The *late Bishop of Winchester*, as he is pleased to inform us in the same page, has *so thoroughly discussed and cleared up* this subject of the test-act, *that there is no danger it should ever be thrown into confusion again*. The late Bishop of *Winchester* is an author whose principles and reasonings the writer of the Confessional hath copied very closely in many respects ; and if we are but so civil as to take him for an oracle, against all the remonstrances of *private judgment*, the consequences
would

would be very favourable to himself, and save him a great deal of trouble. If any reader should be curious to know how this Bishop succeeded in *discussing and clearing up* every thing, I would advise him to read over Mr. *Law's* Third Letter to the Bishop of *Bangor*; and if he is a lover of truth, reason, Christianity, and a clear style, I can promise him much instruction, not without the mixture of a little diversion.

Some friends of the church have defended the right of establishing Confessions upon the principles of *utility* and *expedience*; which bring us back again to the principle of *self-preservation*, with which we began. For if a lawless liberty to pervert the word of God is attended with any danger to religious society, a right to provide against it by lawful means may be inferred naturally enough. Our Author represents the matter thus: "But, say some men, if there be an expedience in Confessions of Faith, we may infer a right to establish them, though concerning such right the Scripture should be silent*." This plea he endeavours to confute, by blackening the Clergy, as a set of men upon whom this test of orthodoxy is not found to answer so well

* P. 28.

as might be wished ; *many things being written and uttered, with all freedom, by different persons, equally irreconcilable to each other, as well as to the Orthodox Confession*¹. Many such things are written in the *Confessional*, with as much *freedom*, and heat too, as we shall generally meet with ; therefore, if the writer of that book is a subscribing member of the Church, I hope he will be pleased to take his own share of his own accusation. But he cannot seriously argue, that a regulation ceases to be expedient, only because men have the assurance to break through their own engagements. At this rate there ought to be no regulation at all ; and his objection will conclude as strongly against the Bible as against the Articles. *Many things are written and uttered by different persons, equally irreconcilable to each other, as well as to the orthodox Confession* ; and, by consequence, *equally irreconcilable to the orthodox Scripture itself*, unless it hath revealed to us contradictory propositions. Christians of different denominations, who have all received the same Scripture in common, are as irreconcilable in their treatment of the Scripture, as it is pos-

¹ P. 31.

sible for the members of this establishment to be in the liberties they take with the orthodox Confession; and the scandal is as great upon one of these as the other. Yet he exclaims, as if our Confession was quite upset by this vain objection: "What now is the *utility* or *expedience* in this affair of subscription, which will atone for the scandal brought upon Christianity by this unscriptural article of Church discipline?" When the laws of any society are broken, a scandal is thereby brought upon its profession; but no society ever hit upon the expedient of removing that scandal by setting their laws aside. A while ago he represented the test as an *inducement* to break through the test: so here, instead of charging the *scandal* upon the transgressors of the law, whose proper business it is to find some *atonement* for it, he casts upon it the law itself. Our blessed Saviour saith, *Woe unto the world because of offences*: but by our Author's rule he ought to have said, *Woe unto the Gospel because of offences*; it being as equitable and proper to impute all the *scandal* of worldly wickedness to the Gospel, which forbids it, as to father all the *scandal* of *heterodoxy* upon the *orthodox Confession*.

That

That this article of our discipline is *unscriptural*, doth not appear. We are not, indeed, commanded in so many words to subscribe the Articles of the Church of England : but the ministers of the Church having received the Christian faith, are commanded in the Scripture to *keep that which is committed to their trust*^m ; therefore, if our Confession comprehends that faith which the Apostles delivered to the Church, it ought to be *kept* : so far as it varies from that faith, it ought to be corrected ; but to drop it in form would be to declare in fact, that its doctrines are not true ; and, consequently, that the members of this Church (whatsoever might be advanced to the contrary in a preamble) are released from their obligation to the word of God, out of which those doctrines are extracted ; which would be a very unscriptural proceeding, and have consequences fatal to Christianity, though it may appear very promising to this gentleman, and the whole Socinian fraternity. The present method of preserving our faith by a subscription, is no more contrary to any precept of the Scripture, than the repeating of an *amen* at the end of the Creed, or the Lord's

^m 1 Tim. vi. 20.

Prayer. This act may indeed be rendered even sinful, by the sinfulness of the matter subscribed; but if the matter subscribed is scriptural, the subscription by which we assent to it will be so too; unless it is wrong for a man to declare that assent with his *pen*, which it is his duty to declare with his *lips*. This part of his objection then will be something or nothing, as the doctrine of our Confession shall appear to be true or false.

Our Author's next attempt is to render all Confessions of faith impracticable and ridiculous, by setting the rights and proceedings of Protestant Churches against one another: and thus he argues; "Let us suppose that Protestant Churches have such a right, each within its own confines; the question is, how shall one Church exercise this right, without encroaching on the right of another?" Here he lays down a supposition, and departs from it immediately, without having patience to make a single period consistent. His supposition and question, if compared together, will make just as good sense as if I should say, "Let us suppose that every master of a family hath a right to walk about his own

^a P. 33.

house;

house; the question is, how he shall do this, without breaking into the house of his next neighbour?" He begins with supposing their rights to be separate, and circumscribed by *their own confines*; then raises a question, which is no question at all, unless their rights extend *beyond their confines*. There is the same perplexity in what follows: "All particular Churches are co-ordinate; they have all the same right in an equal degree." This, we must observe, according to the state of his argument, is *within their own confines*; and, in the next paragraph, he grants, as explicitly as need be, that *their powers are limited by their situation, and extend not beyond their own departments*. Yet he raises difficulties, as before, by supposing their rights to interfere with one another; and declares, he "does not see how it is possible for any Church to exercise this right, where she establishes doctrines inconsistent with those of other Churches, without abridging those Churches of their right to establish their own doctrines." If these latter doctrines are *false* doctrines, their right to establish them is already *abridged* upon other principles: if they are true, co-ordinate powers can be under no common obligations

to one another, but by common consent ; otherwise they are not co-ordinate.

He hath here confounded two cases, which ought to have been carefully distinguished ; and in this confusion lies the whole merit of his argument. For Protestant Churches may either act separately for themselves, within their own confines, as he pretended at first to suppose ; or they may act for the whole body of Protestants at large. If they act in this latter capacity, they cannot act authoritatively, unless they act jointly, or, as he expresses it, without the *unanimous consent of all the rest* : but the Author must have known that this was not the case he had before him. Did the Church of *England* ever pretend that preachers in *France* or *Denmark* are bound to qualify themselves by subscribing the English Confession, and confining themselves to the use of the English Liturgy ? The contrary is expressly declared in the Preface to the book of Common Prayer—" In these our doings we condemn no other nations, nor prescribe any thing but to our own people only." Such an extent of power is indeed assumed by the Church of *Rome* ; but it is an absurd usurpation, and was never claimed by any community

nity of Protestants ; who well know that they cannot act for other Churches, but so far only as they can assist in a general council.

One national Church, then, cannot act for another, upon this very principle, that they are co-ordinate : but it cannot hence be inferred, that national Churches have no power to act separately for themselves. The kingdoms of *Europe* are co-ordinate kingdoms, and, as such, cannot act for the whole, unless they act in confederacy. If it should follow, as in the logic of *the Confessional*, that they cannot, upon this principle, act for their own security at home, then it would appear, as perhaps the Author intended it should, that co-ordinate power is *no power*, and that there ought to be no such thing as authority upon earth, either civil or ecclesiastical.

To prepare his readers for this loose way of thinking, he observes, that “ no Church can have a right to establish any doctrines, but upon a supposition that they are true. If the doctrines established in one Church are true, the contrary doctrines established in another Church must be false ; and no Church will contend for a *right* to establish *false* doctrines *.” He hath a strange art of throwing

a cause up into the air, and contriving the matter so that it always falls upon its back; whereas a fairer writer would sometimes suffer it to light upon its legs. He might have said, with as much truth, and much more ingenuity, that *if the doctrines established in one Church are false, the contrary doctrines established in another Church will be true; and every Church has a right to establish true doctrines.* It is judiciously observed, by the learned and respectable writer of the *Three Letters*^p, that this objection strikes as deeply at the rights of private judgment in individuals, as at the authority of separate Churches: for if the doctrines believed by one person are true, the contrary doctrines believed by another will be false; and no person will contend for a right to believe false doctrines; consequently, no person can have a right to believe any doctrines, but with the unanimous consent of every other person: besides, to use another of his arguments, how can any one person, more than any one Church, use his own private judgment, without *encroaching on the right* of another's private judgment? If these reasonings are thus carried to their natural issue, private rights as well as public will

^p See Letter II. p. 72.

fall before them, and religious persuasion can no more be supported in individuals than in societies. Men may be mistaken, and societies may be mistaken; but the rights of one society are no more affected by the mistakes of a foreign society, than the rights of private judgment in any one man at *London* is affected by the groundless determinations of another at *York*. If any one foreign society may be admitted as a check upon establishments here in England, why not another? Papists are of the human species; not only invested with the common rights of reason and private judgment, and as such upon a level with those at *Geneva*, but they also produce texts of Scripture, in their *own sense*, for all their innovations. As they admit doctrines contrary to our doctrines, and both cannot be true, we ought to establish nothing, lest, in contradiction to the Pope, we should establish *false doctrine*.

It was asserted above, that *all particular Churches are co-ordinate; they have all the same right in the same degree*. If these particular Churches are national Churches, subsisting under the laws of independent countries, the assertion is true; but it is extended to an extravagant latitude in *the Confessional*,
and

and comprehends under the name of *Churches* all the different *parties* or denominations of sectaries in *the same Protestant state*¹. I beg leave to spend some time upon this position, because it is of great consequence, and will shew the depth of this writer's ecclesiastical polity.

Let us ask then, in the first place, whence this *co-ordination of Churches in the same Protestant state* is derived? Not from the form and doctrine of the apostolical Church in the primitive ages, nor yet from the principles or practices of this Church at the Reformation. To derive it from the former of these, is to suggest that Christianity made its public entry into the kingdoms of the world under the different forms of the *Anabaptists*, the *Calvinists*, the *Quakers*, the *Independents*, the *Racovians*, &c. &c. That all these forms were thrown down before the magistrate, for him to pick up which he liked best, and that there was nothing but fancy to direct him in his choice. Had this been a fact, the co-ordination here spoken of had been of some authority, and Christianity itself would have done what its persecutors could never accomplish: for nothing but everlasting opposition and

¹ P. 34.

confusion could have arisen from the co-equality of such an heterogeneous institution. But in reality the faith and polity of the Christian church, for the two or three first centuries, had but one face all over the world; therefore, a supposed co-ordination in favour of all sects, can find no precedent in this state of the Church.

Neither can it be deduced from our Reformation of Popery : for the episcopal Church of England was a Church of Christ before the Reformation, though a corrupt one ; as a man is still a man, though he is blind and scorbutic. The co-ordinate principle, therefore, must suppose, with the Papists, that the Church of England was then annihilated, and that some new thing started up in the place of it, of the same date and authority with all the other novel forms we have amongst us. Our adversaries of the Church of Rome have laboured hard to prove that this Church is, in this respect, but upon a footing with one of her own sectaries, that they may bring a scandal upon the episcopal Reformation. But it does not follow that this Church had been dead and buried, because it was reformed. A man may be cured of a leprosy without being first killed. Our Author, however,
grants

grants as much as the Papists will require. This co-ordination, he observes, must be admitted *upon the genuine grounds of eparation from the Church of Rome*'. But these genuine grounds are no more than the imaginary grounds which he hath substituted instead of the true ones: for here again I must remind the reader, that the Papists have never failed to charge all the wild extravagances of some hot-headed Protestants upon the *genuine principles* of the *Reformation*. They call it, as this writer doth, a *separation*; and instruct their people, that all other separations, indeed all the confusion that can be set on foot with pretence of religion, may be justified upon the same grounds. But in answer both to the Papists, and this gentleman, it must be remembered, that there was a time when they who called themselves Roman Catholics, came in great numbers to our churches, and had no objection to conformity with us as a true Church, till the Pope terrified them with an interdict, and excommunicated Queen *Elizabeth*'. But what is more to the purpose, our Reformation can never be improved into a

^r P. 33.

^s See Strype's Annals, or Collier's Eccl. Hist. vol. ii. p. 436.

separation,

separation, analogous to that of the sectaries, but by allowing the supremacy of the Pope over the *English* Bishops to have been legal. Grant the validity of that supremacy, and then our Reformation was a separation, that is, a schism; because it was a revolt from lawful authority. No man will say, that in case the Church of Rome had reformed its own errors without consulting the Archbishop of *Canterbury*, it would have been guilty of a separation. No more were we guilty of a separation in reforming our errors, without staying for the Pope's consent: for his supremacy being an usurpation, that is, a nullity, it can make no real difference between these two cases.

We are now to consider how this *co-ordinate principle* affects the establishment. It *manifestly requires*, as the Author proceeds to assure us, that the same *liberty* (of being *established by public authority*) should be allowed to all claimants; whereas it is in fact *allowed to no more than one Church in the same Protestant state. In every state some one party has succeeded, &c.* There needs little more to shew the absurdity of this new co-

ordinate principle, than that it requires impossibilities : for the *congregational* form is inconsistent with that of the *Quakers* ; both are inconsistent with the *Presbyterian* ; and all with the *episcopal Church*. To establish all, would be to confound all ; and the very attempt would make public authority and public religion ridiculous. All that can be done is to establish one, and tolerate the rest ; and this is done already. The Church assents to the toleration of the other forms, though none of them would assent to the toleration of the Church ; and it would indeed be as unnatural to expect it, as that the less should comprehend the greater, or that kingly government should be endured under a republican usurpation. Every state will naturally establish that religion which itself professes ; nor can any other have the establishment, till something superior to the state is introduced ; that is, till the state is changed, and the government overturned. The state may have prejudices, and establish a spurious form of religion ; therefore, we never plead the establishment as an argument of the truth of our profession.

The Church of England being no favourite, in any respect, with this writer, he hath indulged

dulged his contempt for that society, by throwing it into the lump amongst other professions, under the common title of a *party*; and he hath some reason: for then it may be asked, Why not one party as well as another? Thus he sets up the right of all, that no right may be found in any; and pleads for all, that he may overturn all, and leave nothing established in their room: for co-ordinate right is co-ordinate confusion; it is *imperium in imperio*, which hath always been reckoned an absurdity, if the powers claimed are the *same in kind*. If I have a right over any man, and he hath also a right over me, and our principles are at the same time irreconcilable; nothing can be settled to the world's end. Therefore, a right was originally lodged somewhere; or *Jesus Christ* must be supposed to have planted no Church upon earth. There was certainly a right, when St. *Paul* said, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow." And again, in the same chapter,—“Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves.” And if there was an original right with the Church

▪ Heb. xiii. 7, 17.

and its rulers, it is the duty of Christians to consider whether that right is now remaining, and where it is to be found; or, if it is not found, it ought to be shewn very clearly when and how it came to be lost. At present, however, the terms of our subject lead us to enquire when the Church of England sunk into the character of a co-ordinate party, such as this Author now finds it. Was it a party at the Reformation, that is, *a faction under itself*? Or did the act of Reformation, as the Papists object, transmute it into a party? If not this, was it rendered such afterwards, by the successful usurpation of a domestic faction? Then may good coin be rendered counterfeit, only by being trodden under foot, and Christianity itself confuted by persecution. Then was the restoration of the episcopal form, which had prevailed from the days of the Apostles, the restoration of a party; and the restoration of the state, which rose and fell with the Church, being of the same religion, must likewise have been the restoration of a party. This discovery opens a very large field, which, if properly cultivated, will furnish us with an entire new system of ideas. A considerable branch of this system is brought out to view at p. 316 of our Author's performance;

ance; where we are taught, by some examples of modern date, that if men write and act against the fundamental doctrines of religion, the *faction* which ensues is not chargeable upon those men, but upon the authority which calls them to account for it, and upon all those who presume to act under the protection of the laws for the support of our common faith. Thus when *Whiston* wrote against the Trinity, the *faction* was raised by the university of *Cambridge*, which expelled him. When Dr. *Clarke* made a like effort, the *faction* was in the orthodox. When Dr. *Clayton* made his bloody speech * against *Athanasius*, the *faction* was in the Irish House of Lords. And, by the same rule, when the Author of the Confessional, and his friends, shout against the Church and its doctrines, and rail at the present bench of bishops in the public news-papers, doing what they are able to stir up all the spiritual malecontents of the kingdom against the *Creeds*, the *faction* is not with them, but with the Author of the *Three*

* I call it such, because the speaker told his audience, that *Athanasius* *swaded to his episcopal chair through an ocean of blood*. If the reader will consult Dr. *Cave's* Life of *Athanasius*, he may learn *who shed it*.

Letters, and all others who presume to deliver their opinion of the *Confessional* with much much less freedom than that writer hath treated the faith and discipline of the Church. A *faction* used to signify a combination of bad men against lawful authority ; but in the present system it means just the reverse.

To conclude this chapter, and connect it with what follows, I shall here insert the words of *Calvin*, who, with all his aversion to Popery and unscriptural impositions, hath confirmed, with much strength of reason, and in a very small compass, that claim which this writer hath taken so much pains to perplex and overthrow. “ Nos consulitis, an adigendi sint ad fidem suam publice testandam, qui se in ecclesiam admitti postulant.—Non videmus cur grave sit homini, qui inter ecclesiæ domesticos censeri vult, *Christo* capiti in solidum nomen dare; quod fieri non potest, nisi diserte subscribat sinceræ pietati, & ingenuè errores damnet, quibus sinceritas religionis corrumpitur. Jam errorum detestatio sæpe ex circumstantiâ temporum pendet; quia prout novas turbandi rationes excogitat *Satan*, prudenter occurrere necesse est. Scimus quanto pere nobis commendet *Paulus* unitatem spiritus in vinculo pacis. Porro ad fovendum et retinen-

retinendum inter pios consensum, *plus quam necessaria est* illa solennis fidei professio, denique quicumque ostabunt ecclesiam Dei stare incolumem, non ægre ferent hoc adminiculo tam fulciri. Non putamus esse qui litem moveant de generali illa professione: sed frigeret illa, nisi *distinctè quisque tam hæreticis quam perversis dogmatibus renunciaret.* Forbes Op. fol. vol. I. p. 498.

CHAP. III.

Remarks on certain pretended principles of the Reformation.

THE *Reformation*, a subject very much misrepresented by interested writers, having frequently been brought upon the stage, and reformation being the object of the *Confessional*, I will go back again, and make some observations on the *principles* which our Author hath very injuriously, and without referring to any single authority, fathered upon the first reformers. I shall, therefore, endeavour to shew, these are neither the principles of the *Reformation*, nor of the *Scripture*; but that they are more probably borrowed from some modern *improvers of the Reformation*, of

a very different temper and persuasion from the first reformers of Popery. These *principles* are delivered by the Author, at the opening of his work: "When the Protestants first withdrew from the communion of the Church of *Rome*, the principles they went upon were such as these: *Jesus Christ hath by his Gospel called all men unto liberty, the glorious liberty of the sons of God, and restored them to the privilege of working out their own salvation by their own understandings and endeavours*." For this doctrine, as I observed above, we are referred only to the whole body of Protestants in the gross; no particular writers of that class being cited upon the occasion. We are, therefore, to take it as the doctrine which this Author hath adopted, and to consider how far it is agreeable to truth.

That *Jesus Christ* hath called all men to liberty, will readily be allowed as an express declaration of his Gospel. In what sense the Scripture itself understands this liberty, we shall see presently. In the mean time, it is certainly true, that *Jesus Christ* did likewise call all men to obedience and subjection for conscience sake; and was himself the greatest

^a Conf. p. 1.

example of it in all the occurrences of his life; from his birth, which happened while his parents were attending a summons from the *Roman* Emperor, to his condemnation by *Pontius Pilate*. He absolved no man from his duty to the powers that were set over him; but commanded his hearers to submit to the authority even of corrupt *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, because they *sat in Moses's seat*^b; only with this reserve, that they should not *do after their works*, because these were very far short of the perfection and purity prescribed by their teaching. It is equally true, that the present governors of this Church sit in the *seat of the Apostles*, though they are none of them invested with miraculous powers: for the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* wrought no miracles; yet their authority devolved to them from *Moses*, who wrought many. They were also as distant from *Moses* in point of time, as the present Church is from the age of the *Apostles*; and, I hope, as unlike to *Moses* in their practical endowments, as the *Bishops* of this Church are unlike to the *Apostles*, even in the estimation of the Author of the *Confessional*.

^b Matth. xxiii. 2.

Now it would be wrong to suppose that *Christ* was more solicitous concerning the peace, order, and discipline of the Jewish Church, than concerning the government of the Christian: for the sake of which he invested his disciples with the same authority as was committed to himself—*As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you, &c.*^c: and he left them with this promise—*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world*^d; not with these individual persons to whom he then spake, but with those who should succeed to their ministration in the Church: for *you*, and your posterity or successors, mean the same thing in the language of the Scripture. Thus *Jacob* says to *Joseph*: “God shall be *with you*, and bring *you* again unto the land of your fathers^e”; that is, with their children, who were brought out of *Egypt* four hundred years afterwards. *St. Paul* hath a remarkable passage to the same effect in his first Epistle to *Timothy*—“I charge thee in the sight of God, and before Jesus Christ, that thou keep this commandment without spot, and unrebukable, *until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” Upon which text

^c John xx. 21.^d Matth. xxviii. 20.^e Gen. xlviii. 21.

we have the following remark in Bishop Overall's Convocation Book, p. 180. "It was impossible for Timothy to observe these things *till the coming of Christ*, he being to die long before: therefore, the precepts and rules which St. *Paul* had given unto him to observe in his episcopal government, did equally appertain, as well to Bishops, his successors, as to himself; and were to be executed by them *successively after his death unto the world's end.*"

There is no necessary connexion betwixt the miraculous powers of the Apostles, and their ecclesiastical commission as rulers in the Church: for they wrought miracles with a view to those only who did *not believe*^f: but their authority, as ministers of the Church, was committed to them for the sake of those only who were within the Church: and the occasions of the people render the like ministerial authority as necessary now as it was then.

The late Bishop *Coneybeare* is reflected upon, for arguing from the *consent* required by the Apostles to their doctrines, to the consent required by succeeding Church-governors to

^f 1 Cor. xiv. 22.

human articles^s, in what the Author calls his *famous subscription sermon*. It doth not appear that he hath done this, unless his *text* is taken for an argument of his sermon: yet he might have done it very safely, the argument being allowable when properly expressed; otherwise it cannot be true, that Christ, according to his promise, is with his Apostles (that is, their successors) to the end of the world. If we may have the liberty of expressing the argument in our own terms, rather than those which the Author puts into our mouths, it will stand thus—The Apostles required a consent to *their doctrines*; therefore, their successors may require a consent to the *same doctrines*. The argument hath now a very different face; and it will not be easy to answer it; because it will be requisite to point out and demonstrate, that there is a disagreement between our present doctrines and those of the Apostles delivered to us in the Scripture; of which labour the Author is remarkably sparing throughout his whole performance; quoting the Scripture but seldom, and then chiefly in a sense of accommodation, as it furnishes him with phrases to express his own jests and sarcasms.

^s P, 23. Note B,

Let us now examine to what species of liberty Christ hath called men by his Gospel. And here, to guard against some false ideas of liberty, we may venture to affirm, that Christ never called any man to a liberty of *rejecting his own laws*, and *denying his own doctrines*; and that there can be no such thing amongst Christians, as a *liberty against God*. I should have thought it superfluous to say this, had I not lately seen it maintained, in express terms, by an advocate for *reformation*, and the advancement of *primitive Christianity*, that “no man ought to pay any submission to that *doctrine* and *discipline* which he DOES NOT LIKE^b.” All the liberty of which I can find any account in the Scripture, is a deliverance from the bondage of *sin*^d; and a glorious liberty it is: but then it is such as leaves a man the *servant of righteousness*. There is another sort of liberty, which sets us free from the burthensome yoke of the services and ceremonies of the Mosaic law^k; and there is likewise a liberty, which the servants of Jesus Christ may plead upon just occasions, and which was accordingly pleaded by many at the Reformation; I mean, that of *obeying*

^b Independent Whig, vol. II. p. 45.
†8, 22,

^k Gal, v. 1, 2, 3,

^d Rom. vi.

God rather than man, where the commands of the latter are inconsistent with those of the former. Yet this is more properly a state of subjection to the laws of God, attended with the privilege of *suffering shame for his name*¹, than a state of freedom from human authority : and indeed the Gospel-state, in whatever light we shall view it, provided we do not pervert and transform it into something else, will prove at last to be a state of *obedience*. The first reformers, that they might preserve their obedience to the divine laws, retained the substance of religion as it was before ; removing only the sinful impositions and modern superstitions which had been introduced without any warrant of Scripture, or precedent of the purest ages ; and the most zealous and forward amongst them never extended Christian liberty to matters of *faith*, but confined it to things in their nature *indifferent*^m. We meet with none of these distinctions in

¹ See Acts iv. 19. and v. 41.

^m *Hæc indifferentia sunt, et in Ecclesiæ libertate posita, Calvin. Instit. lib. iv. c. 17. § 43. and Mr. Cruden, in his Concordance, (a book of more authority than some hundreds of Commentaries) defines the liberty of the New Testament as a power or freedom in using things indifferent : referring to the texts of 1 Cor. viii. 9, 10, 29.*

the Confessional, though they were religiously attended to by the more learned and sober sort of Protestants, who did not then set up a new system, but corrected the new, as nearly as they were able, by the old: which is the duty of our Author to do, if he is infected with any unscriptural novelties. And when he recommends liberty, he ought to make some proper reservations in favour of *obedience*: for there is a wild and dangerous species of liberty, which sometimes takes upon it the name of *conscience*, and in this disguise treads under foot the laws of God, and would soon abolish the very name of Christianity, if it were left to its own ways. But let us proceed with the supposed principles of the Reformation.

“For the work of salvation sufficient means are afforded in the Holy Scriptures, without having recourse to the doctrines and commandments of men.”

The sense which I presume the Author to have intended in this place, is very loosely expressed. For *means*, as the word is generally applied by divines, signify the *means of grace*, or sacraments of the Church; which are indeed prescribed by the Holy Scriptures,
but

but cannot possibly be administered by them. Whence it comes to pass, that every Christian is thrown into a state of dependence upon other Christians by the very conditions of his religion, and cannot subsist as such but *in society*. And as the sacraments cannot be administered without some form, which form is not set down for us in so many words by the New Testament; necessity requires that it should be settled by the governors of the Church, after the pattern of the best times.

However, let us take these for the *means* of *knowledge*, and *instruction* in Christian learning. Neither will this sense agree with the principles of the first Protestants; if we may judge by their *practice*, which is the surest rule. For the *Augustan Confession* plainly discovers, in the matter of it, that the compilers had a particular regard to the faith of the primitive Church; which the Author understands, by the *doctrines and commandments of men*; and is an enemy to all Confessions, chiefly on account of their conformity with the doctrines of the first Christians. In the conference at *Worms*, anno 1557, *de normâ judicii ecclesiâ*, the Protestants assumed, as the rule of their judgment, *prophetica et apostolica scripta*,

scripta, et SYMBOLA, &c. not the Scripture alone, but the Scripture interpreted according to the faith of the primitive Creeds^a.

Mr. *Chillingworth*, than whom no man ever argued with more earnestness for the Bible as the only religion of Protestants, doth nevertheless allow to the Church, “an authority of determining controversies of faith, according to plain and evident Scripture, and *universal tradition* ;” and that the Church is *infallible*, so long as it proceeds according to this rule. He affirms, that this tradition was valuable so long as the primitive Churches preserved their unity in matters of faith : which is the ground of that passage in *Tertullian*—*Variasse debuerat error Ecclesiarum ; quod autem apud multos unum est, non est erratum, sed traditum* *. Here the way of Papists and Protestants divides : for they deduce their traditions down to the modern ages of the Church. We only say, what is certainly both true and reasonable, that the tradition *Tertullian* speaks of, is as good now as it was then.

^a Matthiæ Theatr. Historic. p. 1072.

* Tertull. Prescr. contr. Hæret. See Chillingworth, chap. ii. § 147. § 162.

§§4 *Remarks on the Confessional.*

All Protestants ever were, and now are, bound by their profession to grant, that the Gospel hath delivered us from the *doctrines and commandments of men*, properly so called, as certainly as from the vain traditions of the Scribes and Pharisees: but it hath not absolved us from the prudence and caution, and indeed the common-sense, which requires every believer to pay a proper regard to a general consent amongst the first and best Christians: nor did the Protestants think so; as this Author, forgetting himself a little, hath taken care to inform us in the next paragraph but one; where he complains, that *the Reformers* determined the one sense of Scripture to be *the sense of the primitive Church, that is, the sense of the orthodox fathers, for a certain number of centuries. From these they took their interpretations of Scripture, and upon these they formed their rule of faith and doctrine, and so reduced their respective Churches within the bounds of a theological system.* Did they so? and who were the Reformers then that set up private judgment and the Scripture, independent of the faith of the primitive Church? The truth of the matter is, this principle of the Reformation is such as the Author *finds*;
the

the other is such as he thought proper to *make*, that there might be some foundation for his new superstructure.

He proceeds to instruct us, that *faith and conscience are not to be compelled by man's authority*. Whatever authority the Christian society may be invested with, no Protestants were so absurd as to think that it could *force* any man to *believe*, and be *baptized*, and be *saved*: for the Christian life is a work of choice, and a reasonable service, not to be extorted by any authority, even of God himself; so that men must be gained over to the truth by sufficient evidence; yet not without the grace of God disposing the heart to understand and admit of it. The Church administers this evidence in behalf of its own injunctions: but be the evidence ever so just and cogent, it always will and must be in the power of men to reject it; as many did the preaching of the Apostles, and even of Christ himself: and they would again do the same at this day, were Christ and his Apostles to preach the doctrine of the Church of *England* in person, as they still do by their writings.

When it is objected (in the next words) as a principle of the reformation, that *the Church of Rome hath none other than human authority*

rity for the spiritual dominion she claimeth, the assertion is too general to be true; and the Papists will rather despise the Protestants who advance it, than be at the pains to answer them: for the Church of *Rome*, in common with the Churches of *France*, *England*, and *Abyssinia*, is so far invested with spiritual authority, as to have the commission of *Christ* for baptizing, confirming, ordaining preachers, and administering the Communion *in both kinds*, if she would be so just to herself as to make use of it. For those inventions of later times, which distinguish her from the primitive Church, she hath indeed none other than *human authority*. If every kind and degree of spiritual dominion is denied to the Church, then these distinctions will be of no value; and therefore the Author points his reflexions either against the reformed Church of *England*, or the idolatrous Church of *Rome*, as his occasions make it convenient. But the first Reformers, a few fractious and unreasonable men excepted, were always inclined to do this Church more justice.

The last article is as follows: "The Church of *Christ* is congregated by the word of *God*." This principle hath neither truth nor sense: for the Scripture can no more congregate a
Church,

Church, than it can administer Baptism and the Lord's Supper : and it is a notorious fact, that the Church was congregated by *Christ* and his Apostles before the Scriptures of the New Testament were written. Our blessed Lord ordained his twelve Apostles, and his seventy disciples, by his own personal act ; and appointed the two sacraments of the Church while he was present with it. The Apostles appointed the order of deacons soon after the ascension ; and the Church is now congregated by *descent* or *succession* from that Church, which was originally congregated by Christ and his Apostles. *Paul* received his commission from Heaven immediately : he *laid his hands* upon *Timothy*, investing him at the same time with an authority to lay his hands ^p upon others ; and so on to the end of the world. The same rule had obtained before in the *Jewish Church*, which was congregated by descent from the family of *Aaron*, and the tribe of *Levi* ; and so it was understood by Christ himself, who allowed the Scribes and Pharisees to sit in the *seat of Moses*, though *Moses* had been dead two thousand years before. There is no other possible way of

^p 2 Tim. i. 6. 1 Tim. v. 22.

deriving any authority from God, now he hath ceased to act personally in the Church, without being exposed to all the excesses of imposture and licentiousness. If the Church were congregated, as this writer imagines, in opposition to reason and fact, any enthusiast, with the Bible in his hand, might form a society, extract a new set of doctrines, contrary in every respect to the old, appoint new sacraments, plead *co-ordinate rights*, and supersede the present Church upon Protestant principles; that is, upon such principles as this gentleman, and the Papists, have falsely imputed to the whole body of Protestants.

There are two other principles, which the Reformers are allowed on all sides to have maintained very expressly; but these are exhibited in the new system only to be condemned. The Author tells us, they “*unhappily adopted certain maxims as self-evident; namely, that there could be no edification in religious society without uniformity of opinion; and that the true sense of Scripture could be but one*”[†]. The design of the *Confessional* is so intimately affected by these two principles, that it was necessary they should appear under some dis-

[†] Conf. p. 3.

advantage. But if the former of them is strictly enforced by the Gospel, and the latter evident to reason and common-sense, the *unhappiness* with which they were adopted is rather to the Author himself than to the first Reformers. It is a determined point with St. Paul, that the Christian society is *edified* by *love or charity**, which is the *end of the commandment**, or consummation of Christian virtue: and this writer's performance would yield us too pregnant a proof, though there were few others, that men do not *love* those Christians from whom they *differ in opinion*. Nothing indeed is so subversive of the pacific intention of the Gospel, as strife, wrangling, contention, envy, hatred, and malice; all of which, by unhappy experience, seem to arise more naturally from mistakes and differences in religion, than from any other causes whatsoever: and it may have a foundation in reason, that the division will be greatest of all, when men are divided by that which ought to unite them the most.—Happy, therefore, would it be for the world, if we could but once see men reconciled to that one religion (it cannot be more than one) which hath been

* Eph. iv. 16.

* 1 Tim. i. 5.

delivered to them by *Jesus Christ* and his Apostles ! For as there is no enmity so restless and dangerous, as that which is generated by religious differences, so there is no friendship upon earth so strong and extensive, as that which arises from religious agreement. So long as there is variety of opinion in the Church, there will be wrangling and animosity ; and under this state, our Master hath informed us, that his disciples are scarcely to be distinguished from unbelievers, and men of this world^t. Nor is it necessary that the matter in agitation should be some of the higher doctrines of faith : for the smallest spark will be sufficient to kindle a flame, which, howsoever low it may begin, will soon extend itself to the higher parts of the edifice. What altercations and heart-burnings have we seen in this country ! and how have some *consciences* been galled and overburthened with the weight of this question : Whether it is as lawful for a minister of *Christ* to appear in a garment of *flax* as in one of *sheep's-wool* ? A difference no more worthy of putting Christian love to the trial, than that of some Jewish rabbies, whose consciences (while they were

^t John xiii. 35.

swallowing a camel) could never be well satisfied concerning the precise number of *white hairs* which ought to determine a beast not to be a *red heifer*.

So great was the diversity of opinion amongst some of the first Protestants, that it exposed them heartily to the obloquy and contempt of the Church of *Rome*. It broke them into sects ; some of which, as the Author describes them in strong terms, were *scandals to all religion, and nuisances to all civil society*. Their opinions as Protestants being neither restrained nor condemned by any general form of Christian doctrine, the Papists had a favourable opportunity of calumniating the whole body *as the maintainers of every heresy, abettors of every sedition, which Europe had heard of or seen in that generation*". Such was the condition of the Protestants, by his own account, before they were reduced to an uniformity of opinion by the orderly establishment of some common system of faith. The Reformers, therefore, having their eyes open to the plainest maxim of the Scripture, and seeing it thus confirmed by the experience of their own time, would have been without ex-

" Conf. p. 4.

cuse, had they been so vain as to expect any *edification in religious society without uniformity of opinion*. In this, however, our Author cannot follow them; for why? the Bishop of *Clogher*, in his *Essay on Spirit*, was of another mind; and his authority is introduced in the following manner; “ I apprehend, says Dr. *Clayton*, any attempt towards avoiding diversity of opinion, not only to be an useless but impracticable scheme. In which I entirely agree with him * ;” and so do many others, with whom this Author, perhaps, would think it hard to be associated. However, I am willing to own, that the *first* of these *unhappily-adopted* maxims is not of so much importance to religious society, if the Author can make good his censure against the *second*. For if the *true sense* of Scripture can be *more than one*, men may differ in their religion, without departing from the *truth*; and in such a case, but little danger is to be apprehended; unless this difference should be blended with a spirit of pride and opposition,

* P. 201. In another of his publications, he is so far from regarding the love of uniformity as a Christian virtue, that he scoffs at it in the worthy writer of the *Three Letters*, as “ a brain-sick anxiety for the safety and preservation of ecclesiastical peace !” *Occas. Rem.* part i. p. 57.

which

which delights in mischief. But how far this is possible, he hath not attempted to shew us; either by reason, or any pertinent examples from the Scripture itself.

Different senses may be either *collateral* or *contradictory*. By collateral senses, I mean such as agree in effect, though they differ in terms; or such as do not contradict any express proposition of the Scripture. Of these there may be different sorts, and all of them inoffensive, at least not attended with immediate danger, provided the passage be obscure, or the matter indifferent⁷. But of *contradictory* senses, it is impossible that *more than one* can be the *true sense*; such, for example, as are given by the Author's friends on one side, and by the Church of *England*, in conjunction with the primitive Church, on the other. It would carry me far beyond my pre-

⁷ The texts relating to the *secret decrees* of God, are of this sort; and therefore, the *seventeenth* article of this Church is purposely left open, or inclining to a *neutral* sense. This neutrality is very vehemently and disingenuously opposed in the *Confessional*; though it hath been frequently proved by learned men in the clearest manner. There is no better account of it extant, than what is given by the learned writer of the *Three Letters*. See Let. II. p. 160, &c.

sent design, if I should descend to particulars ; which the case doth not require, especially as Dr. *Clarke* hath saved me the trouble, by an attempt to reconcile the language of our liturgical forms to the *sense* of *Arianism* ; of which his readers could easily see the impropriety : and he disserved the cause by it very much ; for which he is blamed in the sixth chapter of the *Confessional*, by the same person, who, in the course of the same performance, declares it to be his own private opinion, in opposition to the Reformers, that the Scripture (written with at least as great precision as any human forms) may have more *true senses* than *one* ! The liberty of *private interpretation*, for which he hath pleaded, must drive him either upon this absurdity, or another equal to it. For if the *true sense* can be but *one*, and he hath insisted on a right in every individual to put his *own sense* ; supposing withal, after the *Essay on Spirit*, that *no two thinking men are agreed exactly in their opinion about any one of the articles* ² ; then it may come to pass, that he hath been pleading for a right in nine men out of ten to put *false sense* upon their Bible, Of these two evils he hath chosen the former,

² Conf. p. 4.

as the more specious in theory; though in practice they are but one and the same.

To gain some credit to his own project of reformation, he hath ventured to furnish the Reformers with such principles, as they do not appear any where to have professed. And where they are suffered to speak their own sentiments, he pronounces them to have been *unhappily adopted*. His scheme, therefore, is such as can find no precedents, but with some of the rabble of the Reformation *, who either had no settled principles at all, or were made no account of; and so were not worth being referred to as authorities.

How far he is to be trusted in his representation of the sentiments of other persons,

* Such were *Muntzer, Buckbold, Knipperdoling, Servetus, David George, &c.* with whom a certain writer of their lives hath joined *Arius* and *Mahomet*; because the first Protestants who blasphemed the *Holy Trinity* were found amongst the tribe of Anabaptists. *Private REVELATION* immediately from God, *TRUE LIBERTY*, the *Restoration* of the *KINGDOM* of *Jesus Christ*, and the reading of *no book but the Bible only*, were the fundamental principles by which these enthusiasts were carried first to error and delusion, and thence to rebellion, plunder, and massacre. See the *Apocalypse*, published at the end of *Ross's View* of all Religions, edit. iii. p. 5, 11. The like *private revelation* was pretended to by *Socinus*. See the *Full Answer*, p. 85, &c.

will

will appear from the liberty he hath taken with Dr. *Clarke*, whose principles fall short of our Author's system, and stand in need of some correction: for which purpose he assumes, as we shall see, an *expurgatorial* authority. "*The Church*, saith the Doctor, *hath no legislative authority*. We agree to this likewise*." When I considered this passage, I was rather inclined to suspect, that however Dr. *Clarke* might be mistaken in some other respects, he was rather more modest and discerning than he is here represented; therefore I turned to the place quoted in the Author's margin, and found the following to be his real words: "The Church, in matters of doctrine, has no *legislative* power." *Matters of doctrine*, which are the discriminating terms of the proposition, are taken out of it; and when this experiment is made, it comes up to the Author's intention. We all grant, in common with Dr. *Clarke*, that the legislative power of the Church cannot extend to *matters of doctrine*: for the power that can make a law can unmake it; and then it would follow, that the Church might dispense with any doctrine of the Scripture. Therefore the legislative power of the Church can reach

* Conf. p. 179.

only to forms, and circumstantials, and matters of discipline; but *doctrines* rest wholly upon the power of God, and the authority of divine revelation.

Though Dr. *Clarke* was not loose enough in his principles, some other Reformers are to be met with, who have *happily adopted* a set of principles which approach rather nearer to the plan of the *Confessional* than such as occur in the writings of *Luther, Calvin, Melancthon*, or any other learned person of that age; and I shall now exhibit a few of them (adding an occasional note or two) from a work which came out several years ago as a public paper, under the title of *the Independent Whig, or a Defence of primitive Christianity*. If the reader can consult that work, without having a surfeit from the first pages, he may increase the following extracts to as great a length as he pleases.

1. No man ought to pay any submission to that *doctrine* and *discipline* which he *does not like*. Vol, II, p. 45 *,

2. No

* This asserts, in other language, no more than is proposed (p. 16. of the *Confess.*) as the principle which ought to have taken place at the Reformation; namely, that all teachers should be left *at liberty to disown whatever, after proper*

2. No such person in nature by the appointment of the Scripture, as a Priest, or Ambassador of *Jesus Christ*. V. II. p. 152.

3. *Jesus Christ* is sole King in his own Kingdom; sole Lawgiver to and Judge of his own subjects in matters of conscience, and which relate to their eternal salvation. *Ibid.* 123.

4. There was virtue in the world before there was *orthodoxy* in it; which hard, equivocal, priestly word has done more mischief

*proper examination, they judge inconsistent with the Scriptures; i. e. every doctrine they do not like, or cannot believe: for what example we have of any single person denying a doctrine of the Scripture, without pretending to proper examination? And the propriety of his examination must be admitted in every case upon his own report; otherwise this proposal can have no meaning, and will be over-ruled at the first step. The natural consequence of it must be obvious to every considerate person. The Arian will disown the Trinity—after proper examination: the Socinian will disown the Redemption—after proper examination: the Quaker will disown the two Sacraments and the Resurrection—after proper examination, &c. Thus we shall find all Christianity disowned by parts—after proper examination; and, if this scheme were to be adopted, must be contented with a Church whose whole religion is disowned upon principle. And to what good end? Why, Popery would then visibly decline, and the true ends of the Reformation be fully answered. See *ibid.**

to mankind than all the tyrants that ever plagued the earth. V. I. p. 40.

5. Christian Priests have agreed in opposing the eternal principles of *morality*, or *natural religion*. The religion of these holy hirelings consisted—in certain *abstruse points not worth knowing*. V. I. p. 43.

6. God was King of the Jews, in virtue of a *contract* at *Horeb*: and without a stipulation on their own part, they would have been under no obligation to keep the law of *Moses*. V. II. p. 153.

7. Bigotry, chains, and cruelty are always, and in all places, the certain issue of uniformity; which is itself of an infamous race; being begot by the craft of the Priests upon the ignorance of the Laity. V. III. p. 223.

8. Tyranny can never subsist without uniformity, nor LIBERTY without SCHISM. Ibid.

9. All articles of faith are a *foolish attempt to make the Holy Ghost talk intelligibly*. Ibid. p. 30.

10. I heartily thank God that we have Dissenters; and *I hope we shall never be without them* *. V. III. p. 223.

* I hope there are many serious Dissenters, who will not return the compliment; and *heartily thank God* that they had such an *apologist*.

11. The

11. The Priests are enemies to *atheism* and *irreligion*, only to disguise and carry on their own designs of wealth and power. V. II. p. 100.

12. The absurdities and ravings of those reverend old gentlemen, whom we call the *Fathers*—It is hard to say whether the uncharitableness, roguery, or stupidity of these old saints appears uppermost*. Vol. I. p. 44. Nine in ten of the decrees of Fathers and Councils are so foolish, so incredibly extravagant, that it would have been below the dignity of an executioner to have burnt them.

13. Dr. *Benjamin Hoadley*, the best Bishop, the best Protestant, and the best man that ever adorned the mitre,—who suffered under the rage of a wicked and despairing faction †. Vol. III. p. 226.

If

* Our Author is very little behind in the flowers of his rhetoric upon the same subject. “Mr. *Le Clerc*, a much greater admirer of *Grotius* than he was of a whole cart-load of *Fathers*.” Occas. Rem. part II. p. 64. note.

† Such a commendation, from the pen of such a writer, is the severest satire I ever yet met with upon Dr. *Benjamin Hoadley*. This man plainly saw the issue of Dr. *Hoadley*’s arguments; though some others, of a much better meaning, scarcely knew what to make of them. I remember well an observation, which I heard many years ago, from a worthy

If any reader should think me unjust in bringing these Authors together, I must beg of him to suspend his judgment till he has perused the next chapter. In the mean time, let it be observed, that they both agree in offering incense at the shrine of Bishop *Hoadley*; both plead for such *liberty* as rises to absolute *independence*; both set up the *Scripture* to confute *Creeds* and *Confessions*; and, in their capacity of painters, they both use their utmost art and skill in representing

worthy gentleman, who had been a reading man, and was in the prime of his life at the date of what was called the *Bangorian Controversy*. He said he had followed Dr. *Hoadley* very attentively in his argument, and found him so specious in the management of it, that he became, for a time, a convert to his doctrine. If his principles were right, it followed, by necessary consequence, that men could not be called to account in the Church for any of their words or actions; *Christ* being the *sole judge in his own kingdom*, and having appointed under him no judge upon earth for any such purpose. When his lordship was pressed with the absurdity of this notion, as contrary to fact, reason, and Scripture,——No, replied he, I meant only that *Christ* hath appointed no judge upon earth able to *see into mens conscience*. This (said my friend) never had or could be made a question of: and as I was fully convinced by his own words that he had meant otherwise, and was now driven to a gross evasion, I gave him up, and never looked into one of his books afterwards.

the *Church of England* as a *monster* in every limb; with this difference, indeed, that the outlines drawn by the Independent Whig are somewhat harder, his colouring stronger, and his *finishing* not so exact. The publishers of that scandalous paper struck at all the foundations of Christianity itself, under the denominations of *High-Church* and *Priestcraft*; thinking themselves more likely to succeed by making the Church *odious*, than by attempting to confute any of her doctrines in a serious manner. Thus too the *Confessionalist*, a great advocate for the Scripture, dares not trust to *that* for his success: but hopes to accomplish his purpose by 'aspersing' all the leading characters, from the beginning of the Reformation, who have shewn a friendly aspect toward our doctrine and constitution: all of which is as much out of the way, and will in the issue procure him no more credit, than if he had found fault with the time shewn by a watch; and instead of comparing it with the time of *the heavens*, had spent all his labour, wit, and learning, in persuading people that the case is made of base metal. How he hath conducted himself in the execution of this part of his plan, will appear in what follows.

CHAP. IV.

The Author's Manner and Language in the Prosecution of his Subject, compared with some other Writings against the Polity and Doctrines of the Church of England.

OUR excellent *Hooker*, having been a witness to some of the earliest attempts that were made to re-reform the established order of this Church and State, we shall find it useful, upon the present occasion, to consider particularly how he has represented it in the *Preface* to his Books of *Ecclesiastical Polity*: and the reader, I hope, will excuse the length of the following extract; because I have some very obvious reasons for not expressing *Hooker's* sense in fewer words than his own.

“ The method of winning the people's affections to *the cause* (for so ye term it) hath been this: first, in the hearing of the multitude, the faults, especially of higher callings, are ripped up with marvellous exceeding severity and sharpness of reproof; which being oftentimes done, begetteth a great good opinion of integrity, zeal, and holiness, to such

constant reprovers of sin, as by likelihood would never be so much offended at that which is evil, unless themselves were singularly good.—

“The next thing hereunto is, to impute all faults and corruptions, wherewith the world aboundeth, unto the kind of ecclesiastical government established.—

“Having gotten thus much sway in the hearts of men, a third step is, to propose their own form of Church-government, as the only remedy of all evils, and to adorn it with all the glorious titles that may be.

“The fourth degree of inducements is, by fashioning the very notions and conceits of mens minds in such a sort, that when they read the Scripture, they may think that every thing soundeth towards the advancement of that discipline, and to the utter disgrace of the contrary. Their minds are forestalled, and their conceits perverted before-hand, by being taught—that the sceptre, the rod, the throne, and the kingdom of *Christ*, are a form of government only by Pastors, Elders, Doctors, and Deacons: that by mystical resemblance, *Mount Sion* and *Jerusalem* are the Churches which admit, *Samaria* and *Babylon* the Churches which oppose the said form of government.—

And,

And, in like sort, they are taught to apply all things spoken of repairing the walls and decayed parts of the city and temple of God by *Esdraſ*, *Nehemias*, and the rest; as if purposely the Holy Ghost had therein meant to fore-signify what the Authors of Admonitions to the Parliament, Supplications to the Council, Petitions to her Majesty, and of such other like writs, should either do or suffer in this their cause.

“ From hence they proceed to an higher point; which is the persuading of men, credulous and over-capable of such pleasing errors, that it is the special illumination of the Holy Ghost, whereby they discern those things in the word, which others reading discern them not.—Then it is instilled into their hearts, that the same spirit leading men into this opinion, doth thereby seal them to be God’s children. This hath bred high terms of separation between such and the rest of the world; whereby the one sort are named the brethren, the godly, and so forth; the other worldlings, time-servers, pleasers of men, not of God, with such like.

“ When instruction doth them no good, let them feel but the least degree of most mercifully tempered severity, they fasten on the

head of the Lord's vicegerents here on earth, whatsoever they find uttered against the cruelty of blood-thirsty men : and to themselves they draw all the sentences which scripture hath in the favour of innocency suffering for the truth."

: And in the same preface, he introduces some of the brethren who had separated themselves from the Church, as remonstrating to others who remained still in its communion, "with what zeal they had ever profest, that in the English congregations, the very publick service of God is fraught, as touching matter, with intolerable pollutions, and as concerning form, borrowed from the *shop of Antichrist*."

The success which once attended this method hath probably been always understood as an encouragement to farther trials : But whether we can account for it or not, so it has happened, that this system hath been adopted in most of its branches by every zealous opponent of the Church of *England*.

: They who are moderately acquainted with our ecclesiastical history, know the original of these unhappy differences. And they who are not, have a right to be informed, that before the *Reformation* could be settled in this kingdom, the intervention of a Popish reign obliged

obliged many of our reforming Divines to seek for peace and protection in other countries. Some of whom having differed among themselves in that forlorn state of independence, and imbibed a set of foreign prejudices, brought them over to their own country in the prosperous days of *Elizabeth*, and sowed the first seeds of that civil and religious discord, which it may be wholesome for every *Englishman* to remember; though one would wish to have it forgotten by all the rest of the world. "Our Common Prayer Book" saith the pious *Dr. Jeremy Taylor*, "had the fate of *St. Paul*; for when it had escaped the storms of the *Roman Sea*, yet a viper sprung out of *Queen Mary's* fires, which at *Frankford* first leapt upon the hand of the Church: but since that time it hath gnawn the bowels of its own mother, and given itself life by the death of its parent and nurse^a." In behalf of the first *Puritans*, thus much may justly be said, that they were more properly enemies to the outward oeconomy of the Church, than to its faith and doctrine. But the hands of their children have been strengthened of late years, and their opinions not a little corrupted (as

^a Collect. of Offices, p. 12.

some of themselves know and lament) by a fresh party of *Arians* and *Deists*, who have come in as auxiliaries *, and have so far acted the part of Dissenters as to take advantage of all their accustomed ways of arguing, to divide and distress the members of the established Church, and overthrow the Gospel itself.

We cannot suppose that the Author of the *Confessional* had deliberately formed any intention of imitating the method described by Mr. *Hooker*; but may impute his accidental application of it, to the writers he has studied, and the cause he has undertaken; it being natural enough that like principles and prejudices should suggest a similitude of argument and expression; we are therefore not at all surprized, that he cannot proceed four pages in his *Preface* without the use of invectives and bitter reflexions; which are nothing to the merits of the cause, and can be of no other use in it, but only to inflame the minds of men to farther degrees of uncharitableness and factious opposition. These are repeated throughout the course of the work as fre-

* Of this the reader hath seen a famous example in the extracts from the *Independent Whig*, a paper calculated for the advancement of the dissenting interest.

quently as an opportunity offers; and are every where seasoned with *marvellous exceeding severity and sharpness of reproof*. Our worst enemies will scarcely deny it, when they find that *Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites, and Churchmen* are convertible terms^d.

It was the more laudable and generous practice of the first Puritans, to discover the *real faults of higher callings*, and expose them unmercifully to the multitude: But it is easy to discern, that the most unpardonable crime a man can be guilty of in the judgment of this writer, is an affection to the Church in which he was baptised. Upon this principle, Archbishop *Bancroft* is "the *fiery Bancroft*;" Archbishop *Laud* "the *malicious Laud*;" Dr. *Heylin*, "the *firebrand Heylin*." The Divines who had a commission to treat with the Dissenters in the time of Charles II. are reflected upon for the share they had in the *Conference at the Savoy*; which he hath stigmatized as *a complication of sophistry, hypocrisy, and virulence on the part of the orthodox, hardly to be paralleled in Popish history*^e. The word *orthodox* comes in very unseasonably upon

^d P. 300. 333.

^e P. 226.

^f P. 225.

^h Pref. p. 29.

ⁱ P. 24. Pref.

this occasion. The subjects of that conference were not matters of *faith*, but of *form*: and the *Presbyterians* of that time, whose cause he here takes upon himself, would have given him small thanks for setting them in opposition to the *orthodox*, among whom they were pleased to reckon themselves¹. The Author hath here owned something indirectly, of which they would have been ashamed. However, if any reader, upon the strength of this or some broader hints, should suspect him to be rather unsound in his persuasion, such a person is to be regarded only as *a sly orthodox brother hanging his ears in a corner*²; that is, as an insignificant cur, sitting and musing by the fire-side. If he should have the courage to take up a pen in defence of his faith, then he is to be reckoned among the “champions of error of the most palpable kind¹—in the first ranks of whom appear those who enjoy plentiful emoluments from the nature and construction of the establishment; who are therefore concerned to defend every thing belonging to it, not because it is *true*, or *reasonable*, or *righteous* in itself, but

¹ See the *Hist. of Nonconformity*, printed 1708. p. 203.

² P. 318.

¹ Pref. p. 4.

because

because it *is established*." A very reasonable and charitable inference! But why is he thus hasty to conclude, that they who enjoy *plentiful emoluments* are bound to defend *every thing* in the establishment, whether right or wrong? This looks as if he and his friends had been aiming chiefly at their *emoluments*, while they have seemed to be pleading against their doctrines: and were therefore resolved to understand a defence of their *doctrines* as a defence of their *emoluments*. Or, perhaps, this reflexion may be thrown out, to discourage them from defending what he has opposed, lest they should be thought *mercenary* in the eyes of the world. But what would he say, if they were to make no defence at all? I apprehend, he would be *in the foremost ranks of those* who would impute their silence to a sense of their weakness; and conclude they said nothing, only because they had nothing to say. If their Faith is received from the Scripture and the purest ages of the primitive

▪ Pref. p. 5. So speaks the *Independent Whig*, vol. iii. p. 253. "Who know no reason for liking what is established, but purely, *because it is established*: and will they not always have something very plausible to urge in favour and defence of *their Gain*?"

Church,

Church, it is a principal part of their duty to contend earnestly for it against the disputers of this world: which if they should fail to do, he might then fall upon their characters with some shew of justice, and argue in plain terms, that they ought no longer to receive the wages, because they had ceased to do the work. The Prophet compares such careless guardians of the flock to *dumb dogs that cannot bark**: and though the wolf will be sure to like them never the better for their vigilance, and impute it all to self-interest, or any other dishonourable motive, yet I hope they will always think that silence, which argues a want of fidelity to the Master of whose bread they are eating, the greater reproach of the two.

The childish topics from which these champions reason, are “ public authority, long possession, the concurrence of the majority, the danger to public peace from attempts to innovate” ;” and such like. I do not stay here to refute all these accusations: first, because many of them belong to a certain class of arguments which the injured are not always bound to answer; and for which, I would

* Isa. lvi. 10.

” *Ibid.*

advise

advise the Author to consider seriously, whether he may not one day be obliged to answer us. Secondly, because they are only introduced as a specimen, to exemplify the first step in his method of reasoning.

The men of Mr. *Hooker's* days having ripped up the *faults of higher callings*, proceeded next to impute them all to the kind of Ecclesiastical government established. And if we ask the Author, whence all this *unreasonableness*, and *unrighteousness*, and *hypocrisy*, and *virulence* arises; he readily accounts for it from the doctrine and discipline now established: which being established, must be defended; and being *palpably* erroneous, is never to be upheld by the writers of the Church, but at the expence of truth, reason, and morality.

It follows therefore, that the natural remedy is the removal of those articles and forms which have been the sources of all these evils. Then would a golden age of Truth, Peace, and Prosperity return once more to the world! And he is so filled with enthusiasm at the prospect, as to assume the air of a prophet, predicting that this visionary scene will one day be realized; when "the hearts and understandings of Pastors and People shall be opened

opened as of one man, and prepared to receive those *truths* *, which at present are confined to the breasts of a few °."

As the Puritans were ingenious in accommodating to their new discipline the prophecies and histories of the Scripture, even so would he also persuade us, that *Christ* and his *Apostles* were zealous for that same species of reformation which he hath laboured to recommend †: that the forms and fences of the Church which he hath attempted to overthrow, are "certain *strong holds* and *partition walls*, which it was the design of the Gospel to throw down and to level †;" (whence it follows, that we are *Heathens* or *Jews* :) that the kingdom of Christ is set up when establishments are pulled down; that the true Christian *liberty*, of which such glorious things are spoken in the Gospel, is a state of freedom from *Creeds*, *Articles*, and *Subscriptions*; which are *bonds*, *yokes*, and *beggarly elements*, disagreeable to the spirit and design of *Christianity* *: that it is tyrannical and Popish to lead men, but pious and glorious to mislead them.

* Revealed to us in the systems of *Socinus* and Bishop *Hoadley*. ° P. 335. † P. 229, 300.

† P. 171.

* Pref. p. xxii.

The adversaries of Mr. *Hooker* made such wonderful discoveries in the Scripture, as they pretended, by the special illumination of the Holy Ghost. That the parallel is exact in this article, I would not be thought to insinuate: the writer of the *Confessional* seeming rather to refer the great discoveries of himself and his friends to a superior degree of reason and common sense, than to the aids and assistances of Divine Grace; and hath inserted it in the class of his principles, that *Jesus Christ hath restored men to the privilege of working out their own Salvation by their own understandings and endeavours* †. But though the principle may be different, the high terms of distinction which are bred by it are nearly the same: whereby on the one side are found “the united powers of piety, truth, and common sense”⁹: on the other *ignorance, indolence**, *profligate secularity*[†], and the *idolatry of lucre*[†]. The one sort are *honest and sensible Christians; knowing and thinking Christians*[†]—*reasonable men and consistent Protestants—serious and judicious men*†—willing and capable of examining things with-

† See Conf. p. 1.

⁹ Pref. p. 19.

* P. 25.

[†] Pref. p. 72.

[†] P. 335, 336.

[†] P. 25.

† Pref. p. 18, 19.

out partiality and without hypocrisy. The other sort have had their character already; being bigots, partial and prejudiced retainers to Church power^w, starving Inquisitors ‡, champions of public error of the most palpable kind; from the addle-headed Dr. Webster^x, to the miserable and ridiculous sophist Dr. Waterland^y, and so on to the firebrand Heylin, the factious Laud, and the fiery Bancroft!

At the reading of these phrases, some will probably be so unjust, as to suppose the Author wholly made up of combustibles, and that he can breathe out no other language than that of persecution. But this happens only when his face is set against the friends of the Church. His words are as smooth as oil when he meets with the puritanical *Abbot*, so excellent a person, so wise and so good a man^z; or the worthy Bishop of *Clogher*—or the venerable Bishop of *Winchester*^{*}. He is indeed so subject to be turned about by the influences of a party-spirit, that you will find him praising and vilifying the same individual person, as it happens to suit his purpose. Dr. *Rogers*, the chaplain of Archbishop *Bancroft*, who wrote upon the Articles in 1663, drops

^w P. 173.

‡ Pref. p. 17.

^x P. 349.^y P. 183.^z P. 225.^{*} P. 303.

an expression, of which the Author endeavours to avail himself, and upon this occasion honours him with the appellation of “Honest old *Rogers* ^a.” But in another place, he is metamorphosed on a sudden into “*Thomas Rogers*—who extols the Bishops, and reviles the Puritans with the *most abject sycophantry* ^b.”

The two remaining topics from which the Puritans argued, and upon which they chiefly depended for all their influence with the common people, were those of *Popery* and *Persecution*. And here the Author keeps equal pace with them. His favourite common-place is the resemblance between the two Churches of *Rome* and *England* ^{*}. By his account, we have some doctrines of Popish original; we have others which naturally lead to Popery; and have nothing to plead in favour of the establishment, which will not equally justify all the *Romish* errors, and even the Inquisition of *Portugal* itself.

Every subscribing Member of the Church of *England* is affirmed to be *in a train which would lead them with equal security to acquiesce*

^a P. 23.

^b P. 215.

^{*} See p. 87. Note 7 & alibi pass.

in the genuine impositions of popery * : that is, a train which leads them to subscribe doctrines that *may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture*, will lead them to subscribe the worship of Saints and Images, the vicarial power of the Pope, transubstantiation, indulgences, &c. Therefore these, in the Author's opinion, may be proved by the Scripture as well as ours. To such a length of absurdity will a man's wrath carry him, when he is determined to make the best of an insupportable cause ! He will clean the streets of the Papists with his own hands, rather than be in want of some dirt to cast at his brethren of the Church of *England* ! He brings it as a general charge against the Clergy of this Church, that none of them know how to confute Popery ; *their discourses on the subject are superficial*—and they omit the MASTER ARGUMENT *against Popery* ^d. Here the Author is pretending to great things, and, like other pretenders, affects an air of depth and mystery : for he is not kind enough to tell us what this argument is. It may, however, be conjectured from the spirit of his Book, that if we would confute Popery in a masterly

* Pref. p. 72.

^d Ibid.

way, we must first confute our own Church : and, I believe, if we humour him thus far, he will trust us for the rest.

By the Papists we are admonished, that we can never maintain ourselves against the disorder of the Sectaries, unless we admit of the Pope's infallibility as the *Master Argument* : By the *Son of liberty* we are instructed on the other hand, that unless we preach down the establishment, we shall never be able to keep out Popery. It being impracticable to please both these advisers at once, will it not be the wisest way to argue as we have hitherto done, and not to offer any direct affront to either, by taking the other's counsel? Such principles as these of *the Confessional* have made very few, if any, converts from Popery ; and its Priests need not wish for any circumstance more promising, than that of seeing the people of this Church universally inclining to his opinion. The confusion that must necessarily arise if his project were to take place, would soon yield them a plentiful harvest. Besides, his accusation of the Clergy, as if they were already generally indifferent about Popery, or even well inclined to it, must give encouragement to popish emissaries, if they will be weak enough to believe his reports.

As he hath been so free in censuring the Clergy for their *superficial discourses*, and is himself so accurate and *masterly* in his confutation of Popery ; he will give me leave, before I quit this topic, to present the public with some of his own sentiments upon the subject. He complains of the unwearied endeavours of treacherous Priests to pervert his Majesty's Protestant subjects to their *intolerant superstition* : but allows, in the very next page, that their notions of the *religious* kind, such as *transubstantiation, purgatory, saint-worship, relics, masses for the dead, penances, and other articles*, have no immediate ill effects upon civil society *. He has discovered that their *superstition* is *intolerant* ; that is, it will bear no contradiction ; it persecutes, imprisons, tortures and burns the members of society, for opposing it. And what is this superstition ? It is the belief of transubstantion, purgatory, saint-worship, relics, masses for the dead, penances, and other articles, which have no immediate ill effect upon civil society. Did this gentleman never hear of the *bloody act of six articles*, upon which Henry the Eighth burnt his subjects for denying *transubstantiation* † ?

* Pref. p. 68, 69.

† See *Strype's Mem.* Book I. chap. 49.

Why did Queen *Mary* drive so many martyrs to the stake? and to what shall we impute all the disturbances that have happened in *France*, such as regicides, proscriptions, murders, and massacres, but to these *controversies of the religious kind*? He professes a particular aversion to the spirit of *intolerancy*; though (by the way) he hath discovered as much of it in himself, as it is possible for any man to discover with his *pen*, (and God forbid he should ever have the direction of any other weapon!) but happening not to see the connexion between *that* and the *superstition* from which it arises, he exclaims furiously against the effect, and leaves the cause out of the question: Whereas, if the *religious superstition* of the Church of Rome were once reformed, her spirit of *intolerancy* would presently abate, and *civil society* would soon have less reason to complain of her practices. For when a man is sensible that the truth is with him, he may possess his own soul in patience, though he sees other people strongly deluded; and hath no more reason to be provoked with them for their misfortune, than with a miserable object who hath lost his sight, or broke one of his legs. But error depends only upon violence for its support; when it is tried, it is easily

B B 2

enraged,

enraged, because it is sensible of its weakness ; and hence men are generally inclined to persecute others, as they themselves are more or less mistaken. Experience hath rarely failed to confirm this observation. Heathens, under their own religious differences, could be civil to one another, because they were all upon an equal footing in point of evidence and authority. The Romans made no scruple of tolerating the superstition of their neighbours : they adopted the *Isis* and *Serapis* of the *Egyptians* into the number of their deities ; and, probably, had charitable sentiments of their *Cats*, *Beetles*, and *Onions* : but at the same time hated and vilified the *Jews*, who had the knowledge of the true God : and when the *Christians* appeared, with truth, and reason, and facts invincible on their side, had recourse to fire and sword throughout the world, for want of better arguments. But the Christians themselves, in their state of purity, were never guilty of molesting any sort of people, or meddling with the affairs of civil society : though this writer, with a view of apologizing for the factious tendency of his own work, strives very hard to make *Christ* and his Apostles accountable for all those *struggles and tumults*, which, he says, were
occasioned

*occasioned by attempting to introduce the kingdom of Jesus** : and is pleased to instruct us, that our Lord would *certainly have prescribed other measures*, had these been unjustifiable. As if he had *prescribed* all those *struggles* and *tumults* of unbelieving Jews and Heathens, as necessary to *introduce* the Gospel, which were actually raised only with a design to *keep it out* ; and cannot be imputed to the Apostles, or to the Gospel, but only to the blind zeal and fury of its adversaries, whom no sensible Christian did ever suppose to have acted in this matter by a divine prescription. *They found me*, saith the Apostle, *purified in the Temple, neither with multitude nor with tumult.* Acts xxiv. 18. No ; where the ignorance, the error, and the bigotry is, there will the tumult be ; unless we should argue, like *Tertullus* the orator, in behalf of the *Jews*, that *Paul* was a *mover of sedition*, and was guilty of all those *tumults*, in which he was passive, and they themselves were the only actors.

Upon the whole, I believe there hath seldom been any error of the religious kind, which was without some ill influence upon the

* P. 312.

order of a common-wealth; to say, therefore, that the Papists are mistaken in their religious opinions, is but to affirm in other words, that they are the disturbers of civil society. Our author, who supposes any of the errors of popery to be without this ill effect, goes contrary to reason and fact, and contrary to his own opinion in other cases. The Church of *England*, as he imagines, hath its *religious* errors of the *most palpable kind*. These errors, in his opinion, lead directly to tests and subscriptions, which are subversive of the civil rights of mankind. He takes occasion also to inform us, how “the *Calvinists* certainly inferred the lawfulness of resisting wicked and unrighteous princes, from their theological doctrines of Election and Grace †:” though the connexion between these principles and the inference is not very easy to be understood. In a word, he “knows not of any truth or error of the *religious* kind, that could be called merely speculative ‡:” and can see how civil society is affected by all doctrines, and all errors, except the above-mentioned errors of popery. Therefore, skilful as he is in the invention and use of *master arguments*,

† P. 251.

‡ P. 311.

he shall never teach me how to preach against popery, till I want to give Protestants a better opinion of it §.

The parallel which was laid down toward the beginning of this chapter, requires me now to consider some of his reflexions upon *persecution*; the odium of which he endeavours, as often as he can, to fasten upon his superiors, both civil and ecclesiastical; and, in this particular, doth strictly follow the puritanical system of opposition described by Mr. Hooker.

He complains, that “ the Clergy of Protestant establishments have been protected in their opposition to innovations,” (that is, *in their defence against the opposition of innovators*) “ by the higher powers, as well as *Monks and Augurs**.” It is an hackneyed

§ In the Occasional Remarks, Part I. p. 51, he sneers at the *Letter-writer* as a man not fit to be argued with, a *pretended defender of a Protestant Church*, because he either is or pretends to be ignorant of the *master argument* against popery. But behold, at p. 138 of the 2d. part, when he had a little more time to look for it, he says, “ I can but *guess* what the MASTER ARGUMENT against popery, alluded to by the Author of the *Preface*, may be.” Such are the unhappy fluctuations of writers who are determined to confute the Church, and have no principles to begin with.

* Ref. p. 14.

artifice to couple good and bad things together, that both may appear equally odious. The religion of *Monks* was idolatrous; and the religion of *Augurs* was diabolical: if any man can delight himself with placing *the Clergy of Protestant establishments* in such company, it will scarcely be worth our while to interrupt his amusement. The cases, however, so far as the *higher powers* are concerned, ought to be distinguished. The religion of *Monks* and *Augurs* was indefensible, either with or without the protection of the higher powers; but the religion of Protestant establishments may be generally defended by Scripture and reason, though all the powers of the earth were in a confederacy to abolish it. Therefore the intrinsic merits of any religion are independent of the higher powers; who, in different ages, have taken both sides of the same question. But then *Monks* and *Augurs*, through their interest with the higher powers, could stir up persecutions against innovators, who would have corrected their superstition by the introduction of some beneficial truth: and the Clergy of Protestant establishments, by the report of the *Confessional*, have succeeded in the same way. But here the parallel will not hold, for two reasons; first,
because

because Christianity is a better thing than the religion of Heathens, and more worthy of every kind of protection : whereas it doth not appear that the *Calvinistical* forms are in any respect better than the Episcopal ; or that the heresy of *Arius* would be any improvement upon the Creeds. Secondly, because the same species of protection is not common to both cases : for the higher powers protected *Monks* and *Augurs* by leading their opponents to the stake, boring their eyes out of their heads, and tearing their flesh from their bones with red-hot pincers. But the Clergy of Protestant establishments, at least of this Protestant establishment, desire no more than protection to themselves, without persecution to their adversaries. If any of them did ever expect more, it was in an age when rigour was more generally adopted as the governing principle of all parties ; or when religious error hath been attended with some practices against the state ; by which every case of this sort is very much altered ; for then the cause is properly of civil concern ; and the protection of the Church becomes the same thing with the security of the government.

We see here, how artfully, by a turn of his pen, he has transformed the defence made by
the

the Clergy of Protestant establishments into an *opposition*; as if the quarrel was always started on their part. By another figure of oratory, he improves bare neglect (perhaps, not so much) into actual persecution. "A man," in his judgment, "must be in a very uncommon situation, as well as of an uncommon spirit, even in this land of liberty, who is bold enough to undertake the patronage of a cause, to which so many, at different periods, have fallen martyrs. Not always, indeed, by fire and sword, but by what kills as surely—hunger and nakedness †." This is a lamentable picture of martyrdom, but it is little more than a vision: for some of the Author's chief *martyrs* have died in peace upon the best preferments in the Church; and, during the state of their earthly pilgrimage, found a Bishoprick, or a Mastership, or one of the higher Rectories, a very comfortable protection against *hunger and nakedness*. If any foreigner were to read this lamentation, and understand it according to the letter, he must of course think it no uncommon sight to meet *Confessors* against the *Test* and the *Creeeds*, walking about the streets of *London* without shoes or stockings, under all the misery and

† Pref. p. 16, 17.

contempt of *Christian* slaves in the states of *Barbary* ! But such a person ought to be told, that party-language, in this country, hath flights, figures, and phrases, enough to furnish out a tropological Dictionary : and that a man is said to be *hungry* and *naked*, when he cannot threaten his superiors into a good opinion of himself, or get a seat in the House of Lords ; or drive those out of the house, who are already in it.

Thus again, when a controversial adventurer of the reforming tribe exclaims against *inquisitions, racks, and tortures* ; nothing more is to be understood by these terms, than that somebody hath written against him, and contradicted him. The Author of the *Confessional*, in his *Occasional Remarks* upon the *Three Letters*, suspecting that his principles cannot be upheld by evidence and argument against a writer so well furnished ; has recourse, as before, to this low thread-bare expedient of dressing up his answerer in the garb of an *inquisitor*, invested with the powers of the *holy office* : and puts such a speech into his mouth as would be addressed to himself, if he were called to an account under ground in a *dungeon at Lisbon* *.

* Occ. Rem. P. II. p. 12, 13.

I never heard that any man did himself or his party much good by these dreadful complaints of persecution ; and the reason is plain enough : because those real martyrs, who suffered for the truth, and received nothing but evil in return for their good works, took it all with patience ; submitting themselves to the will of God, without whose permission no persecutor could have power to hurt them, and employing their last breath in devout expressions of resignation and forgiveness. But pretended martyrs to falsehood and sedition, can find no relief, but in giving vent to all the uncharitable passions, when pride, self-deceit, or enthusiasm, hath drawn them into a snare. When the straying sheep is brought back to the fold, spoiled of its fleece, or even led out to the slaughter, it is silent and unresisting : but there is another animal of a different spirit, which will neither be led nor driven ; and against which, if a man doth but hold up his finger, it is instantly tormented with the blackest apprehensions, and fills the air with its outcries.

After so many severe reflexions upon every degree of literal or figurative persecution, it might be imagined that the Author dislikes persecution in every shape, and hath a general
tenderness

tenderness for the interests of the human species ; but persecution is a terrible thing, only when a man dares to speak, write, or act against the interests of the *Confessional*. Then *hunger and nakedness, whips, scourges*, and all the implements of the *holy office*, are set before the reader, to inspire him with a pious zeal against *inquisitorial* remarkers and letter-writers. But if persecution operates ever so sharply, in its literal sense, against the objects of his own aversion, he has then no fault to find with it. “ *Laud* and his fellows,” as he will have it, were going to introduce popery consequentially at a back door by means of the *Arminian* doctrines, but *were seasonably stopped in their career*† : that is, *Laud* himself had his head chopped off before the rabble upon a scaffold, many of his *fellows* were worried out of their lives without mercy and without law ; and those who were *more gently dealt with*, (as *Durel* expresses it) *were only plundered, turned out of their livings, or imprisoned*‡. But all this, as it stands in the *Confessional*, was a *seasonable stoppage* ! because popery was going to be introduced by a

† P. 254.

‡ *Durel's View of the Reformed Churches beyond the Seas*, p. 93.

writer,

writer, whose work against the Papists is as solid, extensive, and unanswerable, as any the Reformation hath to boast of. Sir *Edward Dering*, a great enemy to Archbishop *Laud*, was so just as to confess, that “ in his book against *Fisher*, he had muzzled the Jesuit, and would strike the Papists under the fifth rib, when he was dead and gone; and being dead, wherever his grave should be, *Paul*’s would be his perpetual monument, and his own book his epitaph ||.”

Our

|| *Dering*’s Collection of Speeches, p. 5. The Confessionalist, who cannot be content without beheading the memory of Archbishop *Laud*, follows the *Independent Whig*: who is for ever railing at *Laud and his brethren*—*Laud and his faction*—*Laud a hot-headed monk*, &c. Vol. III. p. 282, 283. And speaking of *Laud*, and Bishop *Cosins*, and others like them, he observes, “ the best apology that can be made for them is, that they were *stark mad*.” p. 262. What apology then will be left for those, whose wisdom, religion, and justice, required them to cut off the head of a madman? When a man’s malice is too much inflamed, it gets the better of his cunning. For if Archbishop *Laud* was black enough in his life-time, there is no occasion to blacken him after his death: and the practice is so unnecessary, absurd, and cruel, that if I heard a man bawling against a felon, formerly convicted at the Old Bailey, and keeping up the noise for twenty years after his execution, I should never be able to account for it, but by supposing that this man was

conscious

Our author having judged in this manner, and being now of opinion that “the Church of England still is, though by degrees imperceptible to vulgar eyes, *edging* back once more towards popery * ;” he and some of his com-plotters may think themselves obliged in conscience to effect another *seasonable stoppage*. But we hope they do not intend to pursue the same methods as before, because they were unchristian, and affixed no small degree of scandal and infamy upon the Protestant name. If the author’s imagination hath flattered him into an expectation of see-

conscious of the other’s innocence, and afraid lest the guilt should be justly transferred from the sufferer to his accusers and judges. The inflammatory names bestowed on Churchmen by the predecessors of the Confessional, and the Independent Whig, were such as these—*Beelzebub of Canterbury, monstrous Antichristian, Pope, most bloody opposer of God’s saints, vile and curs’d tyrant* ; all this was for the metropolitan : the rest of the Bishops were *incarnate devils, Bishops of the Devil, enemies of God* ; and the inferior Clergy were *popish Priests, hogs, wolves, greedy dogs to fill their paunches, a cursed murdering generation*. This reforming rhetorick is extracted from a book entitled the *Modern History of Enthusiasm*, which consists chiefly of a series of facts, such as I would recommend to the consideration of those who are in danger of being imposed upon by some of the pretensions of this age. Printed for Owen, in Fleet-street, 1757.

* Confess. *ibid*.

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ing those times return upon us, it is like he will be disappointed. For the sectaries, to whom he hath taken so much pains to recommend himself, are not such now as they were formerly. Their separation hath given them an alliance with men not much inclined to any of the forms or doctrines of Christianity; and, if we except the *Methodists*, (to whom he hath also paid his compliments †) they are supposed to retain in general but little more than the vapid remains of that religious zeal which inspired them with violence in the days of *Charles* and *Elizabeth*: neither is it probable, that their zeal should be revived by his writings; in which there appears so strong a disaffection for the distinguishing articles of our common faith, with an inclination rather to dispute every thing than believe any thing. To this it may be added, upon his own authority, that as there is at present no tendency toward popery in the higher or lower orders of the Church, but such as is *imperceptible to vulgar eyes*; a stoppage at this time would not be *seasonable*. For the benefit of more learned eyes, he hath invented a very ingenious hypothesis, with a little of Mr. *Bayle's*

† Occas. Rem. P. II. p. 25, 123.

assistance,

assistance, by which he is able at any time to demonstrate, that the man who is not a *Calvinist*, either now is, or very soon will be, a papist. But as this hypothesis hath been contradicted by experiment for two hundred years, in this and other reformed Churches of *Europe*, it is not to be apprehended that he will gain many proselytes by the use of it.

I have now given a short view of those popular topics, to which a very considerable part of the Confessional may be reduced, and which the author never loses sight of throughout the whole course of his work. Nothing more need be added at present, but a word or two of appeal to the Author himself: not that I am about to make any *sanctified pretensions to charity* *, for him to sneer at; or that I shall presume to offer him any good advice, which he would fling back in my face with some ill names at the end of it: my design being only to apply myself to his *common sense*.

By *reforming* the Church then, I suppose he means *altering it for the better*: and he will hardly deny me the liberty of understanding the word in this sense. But let me ask him: is it credible that a writer, who hath

* *Occas. Rem. P. II. p. 25.*

treated the Church, and all that relates to it, with such outrageous contempt and aversion, can possibly intend to do it any *good*, either of the moral, religious, or oeconomic kind? The tendency of his work ought to have appeared in the spirit of it: and if his sentiments are capable of any application for the benefit of religion, he is much to blame for proposing them in so suspicious a form. Deists and reprobates rail at the Church and the Clergy, not because they wish to see either of them better than they are; but because they abhor Christianity itself, and would be glad to render it contemptible, by assaulting it indirectly through the persons of its ministers, and the forms of its establishment. If any writer argues with their temper and spirit, every impartial reader will naturally suppose him to be actuated by their motives and principles. Such an orator may easily know how the publick will judge of him, if he will but bring the case home to himself.

Let him imagine then, that a physician had exhausted his breath and his eloquence in describing the Author of the Confessional as a monster made up of palpable error, pride, folly, avarice, cunning, cruelty, and hypocrisy; and could never mention his name

without affixing to it some vilifying epithet, and pronouncing him absolutely unfit to live any longer in the world; now if this same physician, without being called in, should presently insist upon prescribing an alternative to mend the Author's constitution; what would he think of it? Indeed, what could he think, but that he was going to be poisoned? And who could be offended with him for apprehending the worst? especially if the officious doctor had solicited the higher powers, that the patient might be compelled, in defiance of the common principles of liberty, together with the most sacred rights of *Englishmen*, to swallow the prescription by a public order from the *board of health*, and destroy himself with his eyes open.

A

P O S T S C R I P T,

In Answer to a late Production of the same Author
under the Title of

A CARD.

“ THE Author of *the Confessional* presents his compliments to the reverend *William Jones*, A. B. late of *University College* in *Oxford*, and Rector of *Pluckley* in *Kent*, with his cordial thanks to his Reverence for taking so much pains to convince the public that the *Principles* and *Spirit* of the said Author are *not* the *Principles* and *Spirit* of the said reverend *William Jones*. It would greatly add to the obligation, if his Reverence would please to signify to the public, the *true* reason why a testimony so honourable to the Author of *The Confessional*, which hath been so many years upon paper, did not appear in print before. The said Author takes this opportunity to express his hopes, that his Reverence's old acquaintance at Oxford, will be no less grateful to his Reverence for exculpating their common mother from an opprobrious reflection of old *John Fox* the martyrologist, thrown
out

out in the following terms. *Fuit aliquando OXONIA vestra religionis parens, nunc videndum vobis ne degeneret in novercam. Audio enim nuper a vobis Oxoniensibus subscriptum esse obsoleto illi, ac jam dudum exploso, articulo de TRANSUBSTANTIATIONE.* Upon the *Principles*, and in the *Spirit*, of the reverend *William Jones*, it may safely be affirmed, that *John Fox* was an old Ignoramus, who knew not the extent of Church-authority, or of the powers and privileges of an orthodox University."

THEA author of *The Confessional* hath prudently adopted the form of a *Card*, because it admits but of *little*: and the less the better, when a man hath nothing to say. A writer with a pen so fluent upon occasion, and under so much provocation as he appears to be, would have said more, had he judged himself as capable of giving satisfaction to the public, as of sending a little angry message to the reverend *William Jones*.

In the Title of Mr. *Jones's* Remarks, it appears that he is a person in Holy orders. This the *Card*-writer objects to him with a low-lived spirit of insult, which demonstrates *the Card* to be a genuine production of the Author of *The Confessional*. He plays upon it six times over, in the following terms—*his Reverence*—

the said reverend—his Reverence—his Reverence—his Reverence—the reverend. If he thinks Mr. Jones's profession a reproach to him, and can find any amusement, or discover any wit, in objecting it so often in so short a compass, no wonder he hath been so active in writing against the Church and the Creeds. If he alludes to any impropriety in Mr. Jones's title-page, the accident is so trifling in itself, and so little connected with the subject of *Creeds* and *Subscriptions*, that the Apologist who catches at such a twig, must be under some peril of drowning: and if the same attempt is repeated six times within the limits of one page, he must be just upon the point of sinking; notwithstanding the bravado of another Edition; which surely would have been better guarded, had it been as easy to vindicate the *principles* of *The Confessional*, as to print them over again.

Mr. Jones is presented with the Author's "cordial thanks to his Reverence, for taking so much pains to convince the public, that the principles and spirit of the said Author, are not the principles and spirit of the said reverend *William Jones*." In all which, there seems to be a mixture of what the Author himself hath elsewhere stigmatized as "the meanest

meanest of all mean things, *self-adulation*." The Pharisee said—*I thank thee, that I am not as other men are*: and probably that Pharisee meant as he spoke. If this learned Gentleman should be as sincere as he was, Mr. Jones humbly thinks he hath as little reason to be offended with the insulting *cordiality* of a modern Confessionalist, as with the more solemn self-deceit of an ancient Pharisee.

The Author calls upon Mr. Jones to signify the *true* reason, why his Remarks were not printed sooner: as if the Remarks which are wrong now, would have been right three years ago. In his Preface, he hath already given every reason he is acquainted with: but had his Remarks been reserved ten years longer, and no reason given for it at last, except the unreasonable authority of his own *private judgment*, that plea ought not to be controverted by the *Author of The Confessional*. If he in his turn should ask that Author to signify to the public his *true* sentiments concerning the *honourable testimony* he hath boasted of, and whether he doth *really* think he hath acquired any *honour* by Mr. Jones's Remarks upon him; every body would see that the question is ill-natured, and implies such an
extra-

extravagant authority, as none but an *Inquisitor* can pretend to.

- Had the wit of the Card-writer been exercised with better success, it would still have given Mr. *Jones* comfort to find himself suffering under his indignation in common with the University of *Oxford*: against which, it seems, there is nothing to be objected at present, but that some of its members, in the days of *John Fox* the Martyrologist, subscribed to the *obsolete exploded* article concerning *Transubstantiation*. The Card hath been exhibited to some friends, who are at a loss for the sense of this *opprobrious reflexion*, under its present application: for how can the University *now* want to be *exculpated*, while they are not subscribing, *for* but *against* *Transubstantiation*, as a notion *repugnant to the plain words of scripture*, &c. See *Art.* xxviii. Here, it is presumed, the Author hath a mythological meaning, *viz.* that the University hath now subscribed a doctrine *obsolete and exploded* like that of *Transubstantiation*, even the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, by the belief of which, Christians have been distinguished throughout the World from the first publication of the Gospel; and this Author hath not one argument against it in his whole book,

book, which a lad might not be able to answer before his matriculation. But this parallel, if such a thing is intended, will not hold in any one respect. For *Transubstantiation*, in the days of *John Fox*, was become *obsolete* by being formally dropped in the Reformation under *Edward VI.* whereas the doctrine of the Trinity hath been retained as the fundamental of Christianity by all the reformed Churches: on which account they are all held very cheap by the Author of *The Confessional*. *Transubstantiation* had likewise been *exploded*; that is, it had been completely refuted and exposed by the Divines of the Reformation in public conferences and polemical writings. But where, and when; by what persons, and upon what grounds, except those of Deism, hath the Doctrine of the Trinity been *confuted*? To *explode* without *confuting* is the employment of a *free-thinker*, in the bad sense of the word, who thinks not only against custom, fashion, and the Church, but against all the reason, evidence, and authority of Divine Revelation. When any writer hath once adopted that plan, he is, generally speaking, past recovery; and when he ought to argue, he will sneer, insult, write cards, and be delighted with the repetition of his own scurrility. A man in this condition,

condition, if he have respect to himself only, ought rather to be prayed for than disputed with; though at the same time it is a duty every Christian owes to the public, to take care they are not imposed upon by his sophistry.

Lastly, it is affirmed that “Mr. Jones’s principles would have justified the university in subscribing to Transubstantiation.” Not unless the Author is so indulgent to the Church of *Rome*, as to allow that *Transubstantiation* is agreeable to the *Scripture*. Whoever writes against the Sophistry of *The Confessional*, must expect to do it at the peril of being hooted at for a Transubstantialist; this being the only *argument* the Author hath to depend upon; and he hath now worn it as threadbare as the *Reverends* and *Reverences* in his theological *Card*. If he should amuse himself with writing any more *Cards*, the *reverend William Jones* will think it most adviseable to suffer in silence under all the effusions of his wit and scandal; if they ought not rather to be *thankfully* and *cordially* received from that man, who hath vilified all Christian Antiquity, worried all the best Characters of the Reformation, and was tormented with a more than ordinary aversion for the late greatest ornament

ment of the Church of *England*. Nevertheless, with God's leave, and a very humble sense of his own abilities, though with the utmost confidence in the self-sufficiency of his Cause, he will be ready to follow the Author in any future Vindication, as soon as he shall apply to Reason or the Scripture in defence of his own *spirit* and *principles*; both of which, unless the learned are mistaken, or guilty of gross flattery to the Rev. *William Jones*, are now left under some disgrace.

There are some other words of old *John Fox* the Martyrologist, which, in their literal acceptation, will explain the true state of things between the Author of *The Confessional*, and the Author of *The Remarks*—*Quod si is essem, qui perbacchari cum iis contra Episcopos et archiepiscopos, aut scribam præbere me illorum ordini, hoc est, insanire cum illis voluissem; nunquam istos in me aculeos exacuissent.* See Fuller's *Church Hist.* B. ix. p. 807.

Pluckley,
July 24, 1770.

FINIS.

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